VAIYAPURIPILLAI'S

History Of Tamil Language And Literature

INTRODUCTION BY
Karthigesu Sivathamby

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Vaiyapuripillai's History of Tamil Language and Literature

(From the Beginning to 1000 A.D.)

An Introductory Note by
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

We are happy to present the second edition of Professor S. Vaiyapuripillai's "History of Tamil Language and Literature".

Professor S. Vaiyapuripillai needs no introduction to students of Tamil literature. His was a life dedicated to studies and research in Tamil Literature. All alone he struggled through the mazes and helped to establish the chronology of Tamil Literature. The glorious literature of the period covered in this book is a sure guide to gain an insight into the aims and aspirations, thoughts and feelings, actions and achievements of the ancient Tamil people. But, chronological difficulties which confronted the students of ancient Tamil literature were sought to be solved by our learned professor whose signal service was to establish a time sequence for our ancient literature.

Professor Vaiyapuripillai was an erudite scholar. He brought to bear on his studies, an unusually keen intellect and analytical mind. He presented his views in an unambiguous manner. He always strove for truth. His patience, devotion and hard work have been crowned with success. The monumental "Tamil Lexicon" edited by him in the shortest possible time is a veritable treasure-house of Tamil Language. Having gained experience as the Editor of Tamil Lexicon, he devoted his time and energy to examine and scrutinise, compare, study and evaluate a number of available manuscripts of Tamil classics and published, with critical introductions, authoritative editions which are today acclaimed as authentic by the Tamil scholastic world. His numerous studies in Tamil Literature, help not only to throw light on the dark corridors of history but also to assess properly our heritage. Further, they outline the path of future progress of Tamil Literature.

Twenty-eight years ago the first edition was published. The book became a centre of controversy, comments from "Trash"

to "wonderful" were heard and received. Some men have even chosen to import passion and prejudice into the question. But, there are scholars, both Indian and Foreign who recognised the merits and contributions of Professor S. Vaiyapuripillai and adopted without hesitation his scientific method of study of ancient Tamil Literature but were doubtful about certain conclusions, particularly with regard to periodisation of certain classics and the invigorating role of Sanskrit. During the last one generation, after the publication of this book, vast changes have taken place in the research fields of archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics and social and economic history. Fresh materials have been brought to light. It is in this background that the second edition is issued.

We thought that to bring out the second edition without regard to such changes will be ritualistic and against the very understanding of our institution,–the understanding that History writing cannot be final and is bound to change in the light of fresh discoveries and evidences. We requested Professor Dr. Karthigesu Sivathamby, Head of Department of Tamil Fine Arts Jaffna University, Sri Lanka an illustrious scholar in Tamil and himself an ardent admirer of Professor S. Vaiyapuripillai to help us with an introduction.

He critically examins the contribution of Professor Vaiyapuripillai in the light of fresh materials accumulated during the last one generation and from an ideological stand-point. His note adds lustre and forms an integral part of this edition. However the author's fame remains undiminished. We offer our heartful thanks to him.

This second edition with the Introductory Note will enable both the Tamil and non-Tamils alike to gain an insight into the Tamil Heritage. Indian Unity has to be achieved, preserved and consolidated on the basis of exchange of fruitful knowledge of the nationalities and linguistic groups in India, among whom Tamils occupy no mean place.

We express our gratitude to Thiru. V. Saravana Perumal, son of Prof. S. Vaiyapuripillai for having given us the privilege of publishing this book once again. We deeply thank Thiru. S.S. Ramasamypillai, son-in-law of Prof. Vaiyapuripillai for furnishing us with a corrected copy of the first edition and

offering a good number of suggestions with a view to improving upon the original edition.

Our Special thanks are due to Prof. R. Viswanathan who wrote a valuable foreword for the first edition and to Thiru KN. Muthiah and Thiru KN. Ramanathan for the encouragement and help when the first edition was brought out.

Our thanks are due to Thiru R. Rangarajan who spared no pains in correcting the proofs and giving the book a proper shape.

We also thank Thiru R. Parthasarathy (R.P.S.) who has been a constant source of encouragement and help to our institution, for a period of over three decades. To him, the entire task of editing and seeing the book through the Press was entrusted.

We also thank M/S. Pavai Printers Pvt. Ltd for their neat and prompt execution.

New Century Book House Pvt. Ltd.,

Madras
March 1988

FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

If it was given to the late Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. V. Swaminathaiyar to have rescued and resurrected the ancient Tamil Classics from unmerited oblivion and to have given them anew to the world through his scholarly, precise and exact editions, it was left to the late Professor S. Vaiyapuripillai to fix their true places in the history of the Literature of the land and to have helped students to evaluate them aright. The Professor had established his fame as an erudite Tamil Scholar who would not be led by mythologies and fables that had gathered round the names of our Ancient Tamil authors, but who would probe into their real history through modern means of criticism and historical research. His vast study of modern literary criticism of the West and the East and his intimate acquaintance with such great savants as the late Mahamahopadhyaya Prof. S. Kuppuswami Sastri, the great Sanskritist, and Prof. Nilakanta Sastri, the famous historian of South India, and his own courage of conviction led him to break from the shackles of tradition and to pursue the path of scientific criticism, with the result that his studies of Sangam works, 'Tolkāppiyam' and the 18 Minor works and the twin works, i.e., 'Sillappadhikāram' and 'Maṇimēkalai' published in his lectures and articles, aroused at first much opposition from the orthodox, but are beginning in course of time to be accepted as the only valid conclusions in the present state of knowledge.

The present work is the result of his life-long study and research and fulfils a real want in our study of Tamil Literature. There have been one or two previous attempts to write a succinct history of the Language and Literature of this great language but at best they were only collections of data found in traditions recorded in commentaries and based for the most part on hearsay. Whatever differences of views there may yet persist, there can be no two opinions that this is a pioneer attempt to write the history of Tamil Literature on a scholarly

and scientific basis by a critic whose love of his mother tongue can be equalled only by his vast and varied learning and his historical and critical sense.

Part I deals with the history of the Language and Literature from 1 A.D. to 300 A.D.

After a clear study of several relevant matters, the learned Professor comes to the conclusion that Sangam literature could not be carried to any date anterior to the Second Century A.D., and that the period of development of the Sangam works might be put as three centuries and that Tolkāppiyam should also be given a date posterior to that period. Eṭṭutogai and Pattuppāṭṭu are taken for detailed study and the individual collections of the former and the songs of the former are shown in their chronological order. A special warning is given not to class all the works coming under the above two categories into a single period as atleast three of them definitely belonged to what may be called the later Sangam Age. Under the heading poets of the Sangam age starts an interesting enquiry on the cultural, religious influences on Tamil literature from outside the Tamil land.

Part II contains a further study of the Sangam chronology and deals with the development of Tamil grammar from the 2nd to the 9th century A.D. In the study of the 18 Minor works, date of Tiruvaḷḷuvar is fixed about 600 A.D. and his religion is stated as Jainism and a beautiful encomium is paid to his greatness. A brief sketch of the Bhakti movement and its impact on the language and literature is then attempted. It is said that the congregational Bhakti movement came to an end by about the 1st half of the 8th century. Secular literature such as Perungadai, Silappadikāram, Maṇimēkalai are then taken up for study and many interesting points regarding their importance in the history of Tamil Country are mentioned. The study closes with the history of literature of about the beginning of the 11th Century.

Thus we have in this book a reliable account of the history of our Ancient Language and Literature for about 10 centuries and we are grateful to the New Century Book House which has made it possible for us to be benefited by the learned researches of Mr. Pillai. To Tamil readers, Prof. Pillai's views

are not unfamiliar, but even for them a collection of his views in compact form would be highly valuable.

It is earnestly hoped that the Professor's other articles on the subject and also his articles on literary criticism may also be collected and presented to the world in a series of memorial publications as otherwise the results of a life-time's labours in applying to Tamil, modern scientific methods of Literary Criticism might be lost to the World.

Adyar,
Madras.
12-12-'56

R. VISWANATHAN,
Professor of Tamil, (Retd.)
Presidency College, Madras.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE
Dr. K. SIVATHAMBY

Thanks to New Century Book House (P) Ltd., the much-awaited Second Edition of Vaiyapuripillai's History of Tamil Language and Literature is appearing after 29 years of its first publication i.e. 1956. A significant fact about its first publication was that it was a posthumous one, published in December 1956, ten months after the Author's death on 17-02-56.

This work acknowledgedly one of the important publications in the history of Tamil Literature, has been a major watershed in consequent research in Tamil Literary History. Kamil Zvelabil commented on this as " the most Scholarly and the most Critical. as well as very richly documented history of Tamil literature up to the epic age '.[2] The work, for many a non-Tamil Scholar had remained the most important of the dependable and acceptable works in terms of " western " methodlogy, until such time as other major Tamilian and Western scholars T.P. Meenakshisundaram, Kamil Zvelabil and others wrote on the subject. In Tamilian circles, of course, the work was subjected to severe condemnation, because of its Critical approach to the subject, especially because of the dates of the major works, so much so, some of the leading Tamil intellectuals thought it prudent to avoid any reference to Vaiyapuripillai and his works, in their researches. It is also true, that in the light of consequent research, much of the findings of Vaiyapuripillai have now become dated.

It has therefore become important that the text of this work is now given to the readers along with an introductory note on the place of the Author among researchers on Tamil literature. his methodology, on the reception the work had, on the major ' thesis ' of the work, the ideology underlying the work, and the major developments in the field of Tamil literay history since the publication of this work in 1956.

1. Vaiyapuripillai: the Scholar and his achievements

Vaiyapuripillai's name looms large in the world of Tamil Studies. The major Tamil lexicographer of this century (he edited the prestigious Tamil Lexicon), he was also an outstanding textual critic and editor of several literary and grammatical works, and the author of many articles and two books on the history of Tamil language and literature. He brought order into the chaotic area of the chronology of Tamil literary works and

grammatical works. He had covered this field with such thoroughness that now, after him, it is mostly a case of either agreeing with him or discussing how and why he had taken an unsustainable position; there is no question of dismissing his findings as irrelevant.

Vaiyapuripillai, the son of Saravanapperumal Pillai and Pappammal of the Tirunelvely District, Tamil Nadu, was born in 1891, into one of the Saiva-Vellala families, a group which in social terms was generally associated with anti-Brahmin politics (Vaiyapuripillai, as we shall see later, was a significant exception to this tendency).[3] After his first degree (B.A. 1912), he qualified himself for the legal profession (B.L. 1914). He practised as a lawyer for about eight years at Trivandrum, (1915-1923) the town where his wife's parental family was living and for a short period (1923-1926) at Tirunelvely. Though a lawyer by profession, his main interest was in Tamil studies which he was diligently cultivating since his student days. By 1926, the year he was appointed Editor of the Tamil Lexicon Project of the University of Madras, he was already well-known in Tamil scholarly circles for his erudition in Tamil studies and was able to count among his wellwishers such eminent Tamil researchers of the day like K. N. Sivarajapillai, V. O. Chidambarampillai, V. V. S. Aiyar, K. G. Sankara Iyer, R. Raghavaiyangar and Chakravarthy Nainar. Desikavinayagam Pillai, the poet and P. N. Appuswamy were his close friends.

When Vaiyapuripillai was appointed Editor of the Tamil Lexicon on 25-11-1926, only four parts (Volume I was in three parts and the first part of Volume II) running to 792 pages (only 21,327 entries out of the 1,04,405 entries) have been published. The Lexicon committee of the Madras University, however, was in existence from 1912. With Vaiyapuripillai, in the editorial chair, K. V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, the Chairman of the committee was able to bring out the rest of Lexicon (the entire Lexicon consists of six volumes, 3928 pages and 1,04,405 entries) within ten years – a record time for such an undertaking.

After successfully completing his Lexicon assignment, Vaiyapuripillai was Head, Department of Tamil, University of Madras from 1936-1946. It was during this time he established

his friendship with K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, the then leading historian of South India who with his works " The Pandyan Kingdom " (1929) " Colas " (Vol I-1935, Vol II-1937) effectively brought Tamil Nadu within the vortex of Indian history. The association was mutually beneficial, facilitating Sastri with a knowledge of the literary developments of Tamil Nadu and Vaiyapuripillai with a knowledge of the political developments that helped him with his dealings. Another important association he forged was with the Professors of Sanskrit first with Prof. T. R. Chintamani and later with his successor Prof. V. Raghavan. It is told by some of his later-day students and colleagues that Vaiyapuripillai leaned heavily on Dr. Raghavan for details relating to Sanskrit literature.[4] This period saw the publication by the University of important research works on the literary history. Vaiyapuripillai developed it as a full-fledged research department. It is significant that Vaiyapuripillai was not given the Chair of Tamil at the University of Madras. He retired from the University in 1946.

What the University of Madras failed to do, University of Travancore did with ample grace and dignity. It invited Vaiyapuripillai as Honorary Professor of Tamil under the Alagappa Chettiar endowment. He was there from 1951 to 1954. This was a very fruitful period. It was here his posthumous publication " *Kāviya Kālam* " took shape, first, as the text of the mandatory lectures he had to deliver. He also continued his work on indexing the Cankan works – a project he had started when he was at the University of Madras. At the time this indexing was done by Vaiyapuripillai, it was proceeding on lexicographical lines, not on linguistic lines. Later, when V. I. Subramoniam took over the honorary professorship (1954), the project was structured on rigorous linguistic basis (see his *Index of Puranānuru,* University of Kerala, 1962).

Vaiyapuripillai was at Travancore University till 1954 and returned to Madras after his assignment. He passed away on 17-2-1956.

The most enduring of all Vaiyapuripillai's contributions will, no doubt, be the Tamil Lexicon, which he completed within a period of ten years. His achievements in the field of textual criticism are in no way less important. It is regrettable that no major study has been done on the significance of Vaiyapuripillai's

contribution in the field of editing. It is hardly realised and much less acknowledged that the texts we have now for Kamba Ramayanam and for the Cankam anthologies were largely arrived at through the critical insight and editorial brilliance of Vaiyapuripillai. He edited thirty-eight works in all, five Nikantus, four works on grammar (two of these were on Tolkappiyam, Porulatikaram – one Nachchinarkiniyar's commentary and the other Ilampuranam) and twenty-nine literary texts.[5]

But, in the field of Tamil studies, Vaiyapuripillai's is better known of the major literary works. The following is the list of works on history of Tamil literature:

1947 - Ilakkiyaccintanai
1947 - Tamilin Marumalarchchi
1949 - Tamilccutar Manikal
1950 - Ilakkiya Utayam I
1952 - Ilakkiya Utayam II
1952 - Ilakkiya Teepam
1954 - Ilakkiya Manimalai
1955 - Kampan Kaviyam
*1956 - History of Tamil Language and Literature
*1956 - Ilakkanaccintanaikal
*1956 - Corkkalai Viruntu
*1957 - Kaviya Kalam
*1958 - Ilakkiya Vilakkam

(those marked with asterisk were published posthumously).

Except two, all were collections of articles and forewords, the two exceptions being *History of Tamil Language and Literature and Kāviya Kālam.* As mentioned earlier, the latter constituted the lecture he delivered at the Travancore University on this subject.

A closer look at his writings and at his development as a scholar would reveal that it was his interest and expertise in the field of textual criticism that constitute the core of his scholarship.

It was the expertise he showed in the edition of *Manōnmanīyam* (1922) and the scholarship he revealed in his various articles that enabled the Tamil Lexicon committee to appoint him as editor of the project.[6]

It was as editor of the various literary and grammatical works that he became interested in the dates of the works. As we shall see later, in the methodology he adopted for dating the texts, it was the study of the texts of the works that attracted his attention most, for very often, one could see him trying to place the work concerned in relation to other works, quoting important lines, especially the use of words and the employment of certain grammatical forms. To this day, his edition of Cankam texts is the most scientifically done edition; the recent editions of Kamba Rāmāyanam are based on his work.

Within this field of textual criticism, which had such well-known practitioners like C.W. Thamotharampiliai and U.V. Cāminãta Aiyar Vaiyapuripillai stands out because of the historical perspective he brings into his editions. His prefaces to his editions always indicate his ability to place the work he edits in its historical setting. It was his association with Nilakanta Sastri, the renowned author of '*Colas*' (1935, 1937 and 1955) and *A history of South India (1966)*, that gave him this historical view. This association was not a one-way traffic; Nilakanta Sastri himself had acknowledged his indebtedness to Vaiyapuripillai.[7] Vaiyapuripillai was able to place the work and its author in the proper historical perspective. And it is exactly in this area he excelled his distinguished forbears. He could see the importance of the work he edits in terms of the literary and linguistic evolution of Tamil.

The following excerpt taken from his presidential address to the thirteenth All-India Oriental Conference, held at Nagpur in 1946, reveals to us the broad and penetrating view he had of literary history:

> "In the study of a single literature, we have four important branches viz., editorial work, literary criticism, literary history, and treatment of historial and other materials besides two helpful pursuits, viz., cataloguing and bibliography .... In literary history, *Chronology has to be setled for several works and authors; and it will be a branch by itself.* Literary biographies including a dictionary of National Biography will come in for consideration here. Then general literary histories have to be prepared. The latter comprise genre and periods, old, middle and modern. Under genre, we have to include drama, fiction, poetry and several types of literature. In this connection a dictionary of literature will be of great help. There are considerable historical

> materials in our languages, especially so in Tamil, chiefly in the form of inscriptions and copper plate grants and these must engage out attention as a separate branch. Mythology, legend and folklore, comprising motif-index and comparative studies, yield us substantial historical and Pre-historical materials and these, along with proverbs and popular sayings, form another important branch. The history of specific subjects and topics such as medicine, astrology, amusements, riddles, etc., makes a third branch of study. Social history, culture and civilization along with witch-craft, magic and spirits and with beliefs and practices, totemism etc., for yet another branch, the fourth of this group.[8]

This gives us an insight into his view of how the study of a single literature could lead one on to a comprehensive view of the entire literary tradition of the language. And that is exactly how Vaiyapuripillai functioned as a historian of Tamil literature, he came from the single text (textual criticism to the entire literary corpus – history of literature).

Vaiyapuripillai, though a specialist in certain micro areas, also had a full and an all encompassing view of the literary tradition of Tamil. He showed great interest in modern Tamil literature. He was the first Tamil academic to assert that Subramania Bharathi (1882-1921) was the major Tamil poet after Kamban (c. 13th century AD).[9] He was a friend of Putumaipittan (1906-1948) one of the greatest short story writers in Tamil. Vaiyapuripillai himself had written a few short stories and one novel (Rajee).

It should once again be emphasised that in spite of the many attacks he faced in the battle-front of literary history, his editions of *Kamba Rāmāyanam (Pālakāntam* 1937, *Yudda Kāntam* 1937) and the Cankam anthologies (1940) are considered the most scientifically done editions. The recent composite editions of *Kamba Rāmāyanam* – the Murray and Company edition and the Kampan Kaḷakam edition - owe a lot to Vaiyapuripillai.

II, Vaiyapuripillai's methodology in dating literary texts and the politico-cultural consequences of the datings.

The method that Vaiyapuripillai used in dating the texts is one of analytical inference.[10]

He starts with a description of the work and goes on to fix the *terminus a quo* (the starting point) and the *terminus ad*

quem (the terminating point), *i.e.*, the period within which the work could have been written, arguing that it could not have been before a particular time or author or after a particular time or author. He does this by a reference to the dates of works and authors referred to in the work, on the dates of whom there is hardly much difference of opinion.

He also used the linguistic usages found within the text to establish the period. By this he was able to establish a fairly dependable time-span within which the work could have been written.

Along with these, he also tried to identify the literary influences that the particular Tamil text has had from Sanskrit texts. This enabled him to place the work concerned in relation to the history of Indian thought.

Vaiyapuripillai's methodology in determining the date of a text is best seen in the manner he has gone into the dates of Tirukkuṛaḷ and Cilappatikāram.

As the methodology stands, it is, within the limits of its frame of reference, a very useful one. But there was one conviction of his, which began to seriously affect the impartiality of his findings. That was the belief he had in the inherent antiquity of Sanskrit Literature. Whenever he discussed a Sanskrit text in relation to a Tamil text, he was of the opinion that Tamil one was invariably at the receiving end and that the Sanskrit text would *not* have imbibed a South Indian tradition. Much of Indu Shekar's argument that the origins of Sanskrit drama could lie in a Dravidian source would not have found favour with him.[11] He was not as much interested in the cultural history of India that under-pinned the intellectual and artistic inter-play in aesthetic creativity, as he was in the 'Chapter and verse' citations of what were found in that Sanskrit text.

In fact it is at this point that ' positivism ' as a methodology reveals its weakness in relation to ' historism '. The following illustrates that weakness:

> "V. holds that, since the SKT. Pancatantra belongs to a post-500 AD. date, Cil, which has this story in it must belong to a later date. Almost all who have challenged V's dating of Cil, have referred to the fact that *Pancatantra* is a collection of fables and

> to insist that *Ilanko* had used it only after it was codified in Sanskrit would be, to say the least, to be unmindful of the Indian conditions".[12]

Vaiyapuripillai could often be seen to neglect the general historical forces at work during a period in favour of bookish, lexical references. It could be said that the rigour with which he applied his methodology did not allow him to consider the material realities of history. This ' rigour ' in application, it was quite evident, increased in his later years and was in fact his personal response to the virulent criticisms to which he was exposed.

Perhaps his basic training in law had its own impact. He was extremely legalistic in his approach. The more mention of a word was enough, he would connect it up logically to its Sanskrit source; he would not take into count the historical dynamics of the situation.

In a way, the question of dating the texts had become essential by the thirties and forties when Vaiyapuripillai was fully involved in his textual editorial work. By that time the major literary works have been re-discovered and published in print. The need to bring them with an all-India focus was becoming essential. In the case of the earlier textual editors, the main task was one of re-discovery and publication. As far as scientific dating was concerned it could safely be said that the pioneer editors did not confront the problems as Vaiyapuripillai did.

The literary situation in the forties and later demanded that a firm time-sequence of the re-discovered classical texts be established. It could be said that the main contribution of Vaiyapuripillai was to serialise the works in chronological order. The excessive positivist approach he had, eroded the validity of many of his datings, but it is to his credit that sequence in which he placed the texts has, by and large, stood the test of time.[13]

Vaiyapuripillai's writings in this field had one major feature about them, *i.e.*, they were the only ones which had an all-Indian readership. At the time when the rest of India, and soon the western world, began to take increasing interest in the study of Tamil and of the non-Aryan strands in Indian culture, it was Vaiyapuripillai's writings that attracted them with a sense of objectivity which was not alien to them.

But this very same academic objectivity had political implications, and, as we shall note later, there was a *prima facie* charge of cause and effect relationship between this academic objectivity and politics.

Vaiyapuripillai was articulating these views of his at a time when the Dravidian movement in Tamil Nadu was taking a crucial turn.

Annadurai formed the Dravidian Munnetra Kazhakam in 1949 and quite unlike Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, his mentor, with whom he parted ways, launched on a campaign broad-basing his newly formed party, through the appeal to those non-Brahminic symbols of Tamilian cultural supremacy. This meant an avoidance of anything Tamilian with noticeable Sanskrit influence - Bhakthi Literature, Art and Architecture, etc., and an insistence on the Pre-pallavan Tamil cultural and literary norms. It thus became essential to highlight the "Pre-Brahminic" achievements. The literary-antiquity of Tamil and its mythified grammatical excellence was a rich field to tap. As has already been shown "Tamilian national consciousness at a particular stage of its development had to have a ' Dravidian ' ring about it and it did go off when it was not essential. The word ' Dravidian ' conjures up in the minds of the literatti the image of the independence of the Tamils. It is significant that at the seminal stages in the first quarter of the 20th century, even Brahmins who were conscious of their Tamilian heritage identified themselves with the cry." T. R. Sesha Aiyangar wrote the famous book 'Dravidian India'.[14]

By the early fifties, at the time the D. M. K. was being launched into existence, Annadurai postulated that the integrity of Tamil literature and its independence of Sanskrit constituted a major political difference between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins. Any attempt to present Sanskrit as the fountain of Tamil culture was taken as an anti-Tamil move. The Tamil teachers and pandits, who had long suffered intellectual indignity at the hands of the Sanskritists rallied round this new political voice of the oppressed Tamil culture. One form of establishing the greatness of Tamil was to speak of its great antiquity. The pure Tamil Movement, started by Maraimalai Atikal was taken over by Annadurai's movement not with its avoidance of Sanskrit words (it tried its best to minimise the use of Sanskrit words

and to coin new Tamil terms) but with its insistence on the pre-Aryan aspect of Tamil culture. This pre-Pallavan literature began to loom large in these attempts at showing them as non-Sanskrit and pre-Sanskrit. Besides, there was also an (ideological) need to show that Tamil culture, bereft of Sankrit corruptions, basically secular in nature.

Thus, there arose an ideological necessity to present pre-Pallavan Tamil literature as belonging to pre-Sanskritic antiquity. It may not be 'history' in the Rankeian sense[15] of the term, but it was an intellectual need to legitimise the new political ideology.

It is important to recall what Vaiyapuripillai said in defence of his methodology, how in fact, he formulated his methodology.

In an article published in the very first issue of Tamil Culture (Vol. No. I, 1952) he said:

> "In our eagerness to parade our patriotism in all its glory, we write and say things which are very far from the truth. Facts are nothing, evidences are more game pieces on a chess board and the only thing cared for is the glorification of our country, people; land and literature. We must resist this alluring temptation with our might. This tendency defeats its main purpose and we become objects of ridicule. Truth must be the sole aim and facts must guide our steps and govern on conclusion".

In this one could see how Vaiyapuripillai was responding to a situation in which he was increasingly getting alienated.

Vaiyapuripillai's research findings began to create problems for those who were supporting the new ideologies. In fact gradually the leading institutions connected with Tamil studies began to have scholars supporting or supported by Dravidian ideologies. Vaiyapuripillai was vehemently opposed by them; thus the alienation.

Vaiyapuripillai would not have had much of the hostile reception, if the question of dating did not relate to two Tamil literary works, which had become the symbols of Tamilian greatness - one taken as the acme of Tamil wisdom and the other hailed as the epic of the common man written at a time when Gods were considered the fit persons to be depicted in epics. Tirukkural, the didactic work par, excellence in Tamil and Cilappatikāram, the epic of wifely devotion and of righteous revolt against monarchic indiscretions were being used as the

cultural symbols of the Dravidian movement, as popularised by Annadurai.

Vaiyapuripillai argued justifiably that Valluvar was Jaina (this angered the Saiva - Vellala traditionalists who maintained that Valluvar was a Hindu, in fact a pure-bred Saiva Siddhantist) that Valluvar lived in early 6th century (this was not liked by the Dravidian ideologies) and, worse still, that Valluvar had borrowed his ideas from Sanskrit works (this of course, infuriated all the Tamilists).

Worse still was his dating of *Cilappatikāram*. In a radio talk he gave on 8.10.1945, he expressed the opinion that Cil. should belong 7th, 8th centuries AD.[16] The second edition (1953) of *Tamilccutarmanikal* carries the same date. In *Kāviya Kālam* he takes the position that both *Cilappatikaram* and *Manimekalai* must have been written around 800 AD.[17] In *History of Tamil Language and Literature,* which definitely was the last major work written by him, he argues " that the Silappadigaram was most probably composed about the middle of the ninth century AD."[18]

The Tamil opinion of the day took it as a major insult to the entire community. Instead of attempting to refute his findings (as some of those following Vaiyapuripillai's methodology later did)[19] he was attacked as a triator to the Tamil cause.

Kural and *Cilappatikāram* were not the only works that were given late dates by him. He assigned a late date to Tolkappiyam. In Vaiyapuripillai's opinion Tolkappiyar lived in 5th C. AD.[20] This enraged the Tamil pandits with whom an old date (Sometimes as unbelievable as 2000/BC for Tolkappiyam was an article of faith).

The hostility to Vaiyapuripillai is well summed up in what Devaneyappavanar said about those who are not qualified to write the history of Tamil and its literature:[21]

> "Except those a research experience in etymology, and with the courage of conviction to oppose Brahminism and the imposition of Hindi, none of Vaiyapuris who betray Tamil, with any amount of knowledge of literatures or with any amount of Ph.D's or with appointment as Vice-chancelleors is fit to write a history of Tamil Literature"

Further down in the same book he says:

> "It is quite clear (from the above arguments) that Mr. Vaiyapuripillai had written the above mentioned books with the express aim of degrading Tamil. Therefore it is quite in order that the word 'Vaiyapuri' has come to mean triator to tamil"[22].

It is true that other scholars were not so abusive. Yet there was almost a conspiracy of silence at that time at the level of the establishment scholars (by this term, I refer to those Tamil Scholars who attained positions of official distinction as a result of the political gains made by Tamilian nationalism as expressed by the D. M. K. This would include those scholars who are taken as symbols of Tamil learning but were not politically partisan.) Mu. Varadarāsan the ideologue of secular Tamilian nationalism, once Professor of Tamil, University of Madras, later Vice-Chancellor, University of Madurai in his thesis on the treatment of nature in Cankam literature for Ph.D. to the University of Madras in 1947, avoids any reference to Vaiyapuripillai. In fact there is no discussion in that thesis to the date of the Cankam texts.[23] Nor is there any reference to Vaiyapuripillai in the thesis submitted in 1956 on 'Love in Sangam Poetry' by V.Sp. Manickam, who later became Professor of Tamil at Annamalai University and Vice-Chancellor, Madurai Kamaraj University.[24] In both these works, Vaiyapuripillai's name does not occur even in the bibliographies.

N. Subramanian's thesis on Sangam Polity presented to Annamalai University (1954), and later published in 1966, refers to Vaiyapuripillai on the question of the dates of some of the texts. Here again one is able to note the hostile terms in which Vaiyapuripillai is referred; quite often the suffix 'Pillai' (indicating the Vellala Caste) is dropped and is referred to as just S. Vaiyapuri.[25] To any one who is accustomed with South Indian Social proprieties this is something very hostile, if not derogatory.

By the sixties, at level of the establishment scholars, there was a slight thaw. Vaiyapuripillai's name was not being discussed at length, but his views were being referred to and objected to without much discussion. Such a renowned scholar as T. P. Meenakshisundaram in his *A History of Tamil Literature* (Annamalainagar, 1965) mentions Vaiyapuripillai's name only in matters of not so great importance. There is no referrence to Vaiyapuripillai's name and his views on the dates of the

major texts in those places where the dates of such texts are being discussed.

But, by the late sixties and seventies the situation had changed. Even though there is yet some hesitation (some well-founded and some not so) to his datings there was no tabu relating to the mention of his name. A good example is "*An Introduction to Tamil Literature*" (Madras, 1981) by N. Subramaniam[26] the author of Sangam Polity. Subramaniam refers to Vaiyapuripillai in his full name, and uses the honorific suffix pillai too, as in the sentence "pillai was a creative writer"

In recent times there is renewed interest in Vaiyapuripillai.

It should however be mentioned that almost all of Vaiyapuripillai's Tamil writings are out of print and are not available even in the libraries of well-known institutions of Tamil learning in Tamil Nadu. A generation of Tamil students have been trained in Tamil without any reference to his writings. They know him only as someone to be avoided.

It is against such a background that New Century Book House, Madras is bringing out this reprint.

Vaiyapuripillai's contribution to Tamil Studies by (a) the introduction of a scientific methodology for dating the texts; (b) familiarising the principle of Historical Criticism in Tamil; (c) and thereby bringing Tamil within current internationalist perspectives on research; and (d) Viewing Tamil literary texts in all-Indian perspective in relation to evolution of Indian thought, is getting recognised now. But it needs to be analysed further for Vaiyapuripillai himself cannot be exempted from an examination by the canons of historical criticism he sought to introduce in Tamil literary studies. In the heat of emotional arguments over the dates of texts, the more crucial question of the ideological stance of Vaiyapuripillai has never been taken up.

It is therefore important that an attempt is made to present this work (History of Tamil language & literature) in terms of its contents and ideology and indicate its standing in the face of the development in Indian and Tamilian studies since 1956, the year Vaiyapuripillai passed away.

III. The text and its 'Thesis'

As is told in the sub-title to the book, the history of Tamil language and literature that is dealt with in this book is from the beginning to 1000 A.D.

This work has got to be taken as only a summary of his findings on the history of Tamil literature; the extensive argumentations and the elaborate documentations to support them, which are so characteristic of Vaiyapuripillai's writings, are not fully represented here. For a full view of those one should read his Tamil works like 'Ilakkiya Teepam', Ilakkiya Cintanai', 'Tamilccutarmanikal', 'Ilakkiyamanimālai' and most importantly 'Kaviya Kalam'. But this work has one distinction; this was the only work he wrote in English and is comprehensive enough to bring within it almost all of his major views on the problems of the history of Tamil literature.

S.S. Ramaswamy, his son-in-law (husband of Mrs. Sarojini, the author of Vaiyapuripillai's* biography) informs that Vaiyapuripillai was working on this book around 1954 - 1955. It is told that Vaiyapuripillai who had, by then, completed the note on Tamil literature for use by Nilakanta Sastri in his History of South India (1955); was working on this book realising the need for a comprehensive history of Tamil Literature in English.

The book is divided into two parts – Part I from beginnings to 300 A.D. and Part II from 300 to 1000 A.D. Part I does not have a formal chapter division; it is prefaced with a chart of the topics analysed in that part. There are fifteen topics listed. This pattern is also seen in his "Kāviya Kālam" (Posthumously Published) where he lists the problems discussed in a like manner.

Part II, dealing with the period 300-1000 A.D. has five chapters - Anthologies, Grammatical works, Didactic works, Bhakthi Movement and Secular Literature. The story of Manimekalai is appended to the book.

Vaiyapuripillai, in his attempt to delineate the literary development in Tamil in the period he has taken up for discussion, seems, at the outset itself, to take it into two major chronological units - beginnings to 300 A.D. and from 300 A.D. to 1000 A.D. The first phase, quite obviously deals with

the "Cankam period". It is important to know how he comprehends the literary developments of this period, so much eulogized by the protagonists of Tamil culture. The pivotal portions in this work relating to this question are the following paragraphs:

> "...... No poet of the Sangam Age seems to be earlier than the second century A.D.
>
> We are as yet far from the beginning of Tamil literature. Before the second century A.D. that must have been crude attempts at literary expressions and those attempts must have been going on for a pretty long time. Moreover, the style, the diction and metrical perfection of the Sangam poems require for their development a considerably long period. At a rough computation, we may put this period of development as those centuries.
>
> Looking back beyond these long centuries, we sight a period when the Brahmi inscriptions were in vogue. They show the Tamil script in its formative stage and from this stage up to its full development and its adaptation for literary purposes, the above estimate allows sufficient interval. Development in language, script and literature must have been going on at a rapid pace. Powerful influences must have been at work during this period as evidenced by the Brahmi inscriptions. The words 'Kutumpika' "Īla" and the circumstances in which the inscriptions were written tell their own tale. Contact with Sanskrit and Prakrit languages and literature, with adjacent countries like Ceylon, and with the Buddhist and the Saiva religions must have been largely influential in shaping the Tamil mind. The continuous influx of people from the North also must have had its influence. The Tamil language must have received new tributaries in its stream. Thus the even tenor of the life of the ancient Tamilian was ruffled and invigorated, *a desire was created in him to emulate Sanskrit Literature. The religious and moral side of the ancient Tamilians was given a new turn by the new influences noted above. The secular side remained uninfluenced and it went on very much as before.* The earliest literature would have necessarily its roots in the native soil of the Tamils and this literature must have been in verse".

Any doubt relating to the period when this ' new turn ' was manifest, is cleared up subsequently when he specifically mentions how these are reflected in Purananūru and Patiṟṟupattu.

> " A detailed description of a Yaga performance in Puram 166 and frequent references to Vedic gods in Puram (*e.g.*, 16 23) Patirrupattu (*e.g.*, 11) and other early collections furnish evidence of the spread of the vedic religion among the Tamils. Buddhists were also propagating their religion in Tamil Countries ....
>
> ....

> some poets bear Buddhist names, e.g. Ilambodhiyar, Theradaran, Siru-ven-thēraiyar etc. Jainism supplied a new religious force which was for centuries a powerful rival to Hinduism in the South. Jaine mythology is found in Puram 175 and Akam 59. Thus the Tamil land became a fertile nursery and the several religions noted above throve in friendly rivalry".

It is quite clear that the *period of new turn* in which several religious ideologies flourished in Tamil Nadu *was the Cankam period.* It is his contention that the period from the Brahmi inscriptions (according to him dating from 3rd century BC) to the end 100 A.D. was a period *Preparatory* to the Cankam period and the Cankam period was the turning point.

Vaiyapuripillai takes his " new turn " as one essentially seen only in the religious and ethical life of the community. *It is his considered view that " the secular side remained uninfluenced and it went on very much as before ".* He takes the laudatory *puram* poems and the pre-marital and marital akam poems as coming from and depicting the earlier phase. As he concludes his discussion on the strength of the religious and the ethical fervour seen in the Cankam literary corpus, he makes the following comment:

> " against this background lay scattered the several poetic pieces of the earlies times. They were secular, a good part of them praising Kings and Chieftains and subtly introducing religious elements to attract and influence the nobility of the land, and the rest, dealing with love in all its aspects, to appeal to the literate among the masses ".

The assumptions implicit in the above statement are far-reaching. He says. (a) 'that the unadulterated secular puram poems – at least, some of them – must belong to an earlier phase than the Cankam period; and (b) that the akam poems, as they stood were meant for the literate among the masses'. His understanding of the relationship of literature to (and in) society is that, while a major change is taking place in the religious life of the community at the secular level, *i.e.*, at non-religious ' mundane ' level of social existence those could have no effect.

Leaving those questions relating to the language of the Brahmi inscriptions and their affinity to, *(i.e.,)* how far they were close to) the language of Cankam texts, which post-Vaiyapuripillai research has answered and taking only the assumption that religious changes in society have no relationship to the temporal

power structure of that society, one would find Vaiyapuripillai taking quite an irreconcilable position which a scholar keen on the historical method could ill-afford to. This is an important ideological facet of Vaiyapuripillai; not quite well noticed, but which needs close watch.

Vaiyapuripillai's, delineation of the literary transition from the period of the Brahmi inscription cannot be sustained in the face of subsequent research done on the problem. Iravatam Mahadevan, who more than any other scholar of recent times has been responsible for sorting out the problems of the date and the content of the Brahmi inscriptions states that "linguistic analysis shows they (the Brahmi inscriptions) emerge in simple intelligible Tamil not very different in its matrix .... from the Tamil of the Cankam period" [27] He also states that "the assumption that several centuries must elapse for the full development of a written language is not necessarily correct. The religious and cultural ferment generated in the Tamil country by the Buddhist and Jaina creeds and the enormous and perhaps sudden increase in prosperity on account of Indo-Roman trade must have triggered off a rapid development of the written language around the turn of the christian era" [28] Though this would be in agreement with the cultural ferment of which Vaiyapuripillai himself speaks, the date is clearly two hundred years earlier. Thus, the date would be around 100 B.C - to 100 A.D. a date which is not so appealing to Vaiyapuripillai. On the basis of Greco Roman evidence and their congruity with some of the references found in Cankam literature, Vaiyapuripillai would place the period between 100 - 250, A.D. (P. 21)

There is one more opinion of Vaiyapuripillai which has been challenged quite effectively. Speaking of the Akam poems of the Cankam corpus, he said:

> " Tall claims are sometimes made that the Aham poems are the sole monopoly of the ancient Tamils. Sanskrit literature abounds with poems of this nature and indeed some of these poems are very ancient. I may refer to the famous Hala *Satassi.* It is a collection of 700 erotic gathas in the Arya metre in Mahārāshtric Prakrit and it is ascribed to King Hala (A.D. 20-24) " (p. 45)

In comparative study of ancient Tamil poetry and its Sanskrit

counterparts, George L. Hart III went precisely into this question in detail and concluded:

> " The Sattasai is....................filled with so many close parallels to Tamil verses that their close relationship cannot be questioned. Furthermore, because of the Dravidian metre and Dravidian rhyme that first appear in Indo-Aryan in the Sattasai and show how dependent that anthology is on the Dravidian tradition, *there can be little doubt that themes and situations that first appear in the Sattasai come from a southern tradition of poetry and not a northern one.* and yet the agreement between situations and themes in ancient Tamil and Sattasai is not great enough for one to have borrowed directly from the other"-29

Having dealt with the Cankam period as a turning point in Tamilian literary history in which there was a religious ferment which did not have anything substantial to do with the basic life of the people, he goes on to mark out the succeeding periods. It is true that an impression has been given at the outset that he tends to take the period ranging from 300 - 1000 AD as one era. But, a closer look would reveal that he would phase it out into two units: (a) from fourth century to the end of fifth century A.D. *i.e.,* 300 A.D. to about 499 A.D. and (b) from sixth century to the end of the ninth/beginning of tenth.

The dividing line between (a & b) is the Bhakti movement. " This movement began in the 6th century, caught the imagination of the people and spread rapidly. The controversy which had hitherto been conducted on a generally intellectual level became now coloured with emotion and the sectarian spirit consequently deepened. It gathered momentum as time passed and changed to purely emotional level " (p.78).

He takes the period from the beginning of fourth century A.D. as marking " a new epoch in the history of Tamil language and literature even as it does in the political and social history of the Tamil land ". He does not mention what the epoch-making political and social events were, but he mentions the major literary event; it was the effort "to collect the ancient poems and arrange them in handy and systematic anthologies" (p. 49) But, " the collections were made after the first grammatical treatises were written or at least after grammatical speculations had crystallized into conventional terms " (p.51). Tolkappiyar, the author of Tolkappiyam, is taken as belonging to the second half of the fifth century A.D. (p.65).

The emergence of the concept of ‘ Centamil ’ (standard Tamil) is also traced to this period.

Vaiyapuripillai takes Jainism as the dominant religion in this period and considers the formation in 470 AD of the Dramila Sangha by Vajranandi, as “ an event of the first-rate importance (that) occurred in the history of Tamil language and culture ” (p.58) for, according to him, inspite of the paucity of direct evidence ‘ the remarkable output of grammatical and ethical works soon after the establishment ” (p.61). He was of the opinion that “ the smooth and gentle flow of harmony (that characterised this period) existed till the end of the fifth century ” (p.78). It is perhaps the extent and the manner of achievements of the Jains that prompted him to say that “ so far as the Tamil region in concerned, we may say that the Jains were the real apostles of culture and learning. ” (p.60)

It is refreshing to note that Vaiyapuripillai has not failed to highlight the socio-political significance of the acceptance of the concept of ‘ Centamil ’ He speaks of the importance of Madurai as a city in social, economic and cultural terms and adds that Centamil must have been the language of the upper class and quotes Tolkappiyam to justify his surmise (p.75)

Inspite of his emphasis that this was a period of great socio-political importance in the history of Tamil Nadu, he has not dealt with that aspect at all.

A close reading of what he has written on the subsequent period (from the beginning of the sixth century to the end of the ninth) would show that Vaiyapuripillai identifies four literary trends with the second one (the bhakthi movement) dominating the other three. The four major trends are:

(i) The rise of gnomic and didactic works, ushered in by the great Thirukkural of Valluvar. This was essentially the result of the Jaina option for proselytism, ‘ to gain the allegiance of the people ’ (p.79)

(ii) The bhakthi movement of the Vaidic religions (Saivaism and Vaishnavism). This movement was a response to the success of the Jains. “ The success of the Jains set them thinking and a rival religious force strong enough to stem the tide of overspreading Jainism had to be created ”. “Political powers also took sides in this grim battle of religion ” (p.101). Vaiyapuripillai says that it began in the sixth century and its

culminating point was about the first quarter of the seventh century. The Saivaite movement preceded the Vaishnavite movement, the latter " represented by the twelve Alwars who flourished between A.D. 700 - 900 ".

This was the dominant trend and it leaves its imprint on the entire literary production of the period.

(iii) The continuity of " other and more ancient forces " (p.134) as could be seen in the highly stylized forms like Kovai. This was a feature seen in the secular literature of the period.

(iv) The rise of the Kavyas, another literary offshoot of the highly resourceful Jainas. "The Jains tried to gain the allegiance of the people by writing stories about royal personages who figured largely in the history of their religion and culture and about their saints and other great men " (p.137)

The epics dealt with in their chronological order are Perunkatai, Cilapatikāram, Manimēkalai, Cīvakacintāmani, Kuntalakēci, etc.,

Vaiyapuripillai, concentrating most, as he has, on the history of ideas, seems to consider the religious disputes and controversies as pivotal in the conflict between Jainism and Buddhism on one side and the Hinduism on the other. In his analysis the bhakthi movement seems to be, at least at the start, not a primary cause but only a secondary one, " there was one element which fanned the flame of controversy to red heat and that was the bhakthi " (p.78)

It is important to observe the manner Vaiyapuripillai deals with the bhakthi movement. Though he had stated the importance of the movement in the literary formation of the period, and had emphasised the popular character of the movement, he does not go into the all-important questions of:

(a) who reacted against the Jains or who led this reaction against the Jains?

and (b) why did they react; in other words what was the need for such a reaction?

The highly positivist approach he has adopted would have naturally shunned him from raising these questions. Nevertheless, as these are the questions, which had determined the exact character of the movement and the nature of its literary output the questions are important. It is redeeming to note that he describes the chief challenge the Bhakthi movement had to face, thus; " Neither in the *ghatikas* nor in the *Yagas* were the

people at large allowed to participate. Brahminism had to be transformed into Hinduism in which all and sundry could take part " (p.100)

From the manner he has structured the periods and the phases, it is quite clear that Vaiyapuripillai was trying to get at a history of the people and the region in so far as the history of that literature was concerned; he was not concerned with literary history, in the sense it is an interaction of literature and history; *i.e.*, as one of studying the role of literature in history.

When compared with the periodisation given in his ' *Kāviya Kālam* ' the one given here looks better structured.

The periodization given in Kaviya Kalam is as follows:

1. Murcanka Kālam (Early Cankam Period)
   AD 100-350
2. Tokai Cey Kālam (Period of anthologization)
   AD 400-500
3. Pircanka Kālam (Later Cankam Period)
   AD 600-750
4. Bhaktinurkālam (Period of Bhakti works)
   AD 600-900
5. Neeti Nurkālam (Period of didactic works)
   AD 600-850
6. Murkāviyakālam (Early epic period)
   AD 750-1000
7. Pirkāviya kālam (late epic period)
   AD 1100-1300
8. Tattuva Nurkālam (Period of Philosophical works)
   AD 1000-1350
9. Viyākkiyāna Kālam (Period of the commentaries)
   AD 1200-1500
10. Purāna Pirapanta Kālam (Period of Puranas and Prabandhas)
    AD 1500-1850
11. Tarkkālam (Modern Period)
    AD 1850-

The period covered in this text is only upto the sixth mentioned above. The concept of periodization in *Kāviya Kālam* seems to be one of finding a chronological format for placing the major literary activities and literary forms in Tamil in a 'development' perspective. Compared with such an extreme form of empiricism, the one in *History of Tamil Language and Literature,* seems to have an underlying ideology and that is, literature is primarily a product of ideas. The manner Vaiyapuripillai applied it was

from above, i.e., he saw ideas as factors motivating the change and the people act as agents for the ideas. Vaiyapuripillai, in other words, has been Hegelian in his approach.

It is also clear from the manner he had described the " new turns " and developments, Vaiyapuripillai had not paid much heed to indigenous poetic traditions of akam and puram (which he himself praises, p.46) and had not tried to explain the ideological and the aesthetic significance of the new influences in relation to the indigenous poetic traditions. It could be said that he failed to see the process of literary formation in Tamil Nadu as a process of acculturation, if not enculturation of the ideas that came into Tamil Nadu but saw them supersessions which did not owe much to the earlier traditions. Vaiyapuripillai, also failed to realise that the Tamil tradition too had an important place in the composite Indian tradition and that what has been taken as the general Sanskrit culture was itself an outcome of the mingling of the Aryan and non-Aryan trends. Vaiyapuripillai, a victim at the hands of ' Dravidian ' ideologues did not want to accept this concept of shared themes.

The book, inspite of its title, has much less on language and the little that is found is more philological in nature than vigorously linguistic. Viewed in terms of Linguistics, what is found in this work cannot be described as history of Tamil Language.

And that takes us on to an assessment of the work in relation to the subsequent development in the fields of knowledge concerned.

IV. Research Developments in areas connected with Tamil Literary History since 1956

It would be grossly unfair by any scholar to judge him by those developments in the fields of his/her concern, subsequent to the person's death. Nonetheless such an attempt is essential to establish his/her continuing academic significance and to see how intuitive the scholar was of the developments that were to take place soon.[30]

It would not be possible to go into each of those specialised areas which meet at the inter-disciplinary confluence of Literary

History. It is only possible, in an introductory note like this, to chart out the contours of the change.

It is rather ironic that Vaiyapuripillai was summarising his views in Tamil with almost inflexible rigidity at a time when there were challenges to the existing historiographical notions of Northern/Aryan supremacy in Indian culture formation and Indian historiography was changing. It is all the more dis heartening to note that he was not unaware of these changes: he refers to them in an *enpassant* manner in his presidential address.

> "Those very exhaustive and intensive studies made of the culture of the Gangetic valley, its authors and its diffusion into other parts of the gut. Continent and even beyond in the South Asian region began to reveal that there was something most in that culture-complex, which until then was considered exclusively 'Aryan' and 'Sanskrits'. The linguistic researches of Burrow and Emeneau, the archaeological excavations of Wheeler, the cultural studies of Filliozot and Suniti Kumar Chatterjee revealed the urgent need to explore Dravidian South more closely. *And tamil perhaps the only non-Aryan language in India that records the changes that were taking place with the penetration of the Aryan influence began to attract the intellectual attention in a manner that it had not in the earlier days's.*[31]

This led to a fundamental questioning of some of the hitherto held basic assumptions. The emerging notion was " there cannot be any conception of India without either Dravidian (and other pre-Aryan) or Aryan. Like the warp and woof of a piece of woven stuff, "Aryan and Dravidian have become interlaced **with each other to furnish the texture of Indian civilization".**[32]

All these led to a serious erosion of the carefully constructed and consciously preserved historiographical notions of some South Indian scholars that South India and Tamil Nadu were always at the receiving end of the cultural transmission and **have had nothing to offer**[33]

The late fifties and the early sixties also marked a definite departure in Indian historiography in general and with the arrival of scholars like Kosambi, R. S. Sharma and Romila Thapar concepts of Aryan supremacy and Sanskrit dominance ceased to be key points in viewing Indian historical development. There was an effort to synthesise anthropology and archaeology, epigraphy and sociological theses to get a comprehensive picture of the over-all Indian development, in which folkways figured

as prominently as sanctified literary sources [34].

All these led to the emergence of a historical viewpoint of development unsustainable from the standpoint of Vaiyapuripillai. For instance, studies in the field of linguistics, (which received great impetus in the sixties) showed:

> "........................the earliest vigorous bloom of Tamil culture began before the Sanskritization of the South could have had any strong impact on Tamil society. It is now an admitted fact by scholars in historical Dravidian linguistics that Proto-South Dravidian linguistic unity disintegrated sometime between the 8th - 6th Cent. B.C. *and it seems that Tamil began to be cultivated as a literary language sometime about the 4th or 3rd cent. B.C.* [35].

Besides linguistics, archaeology also began to provide a picture of a South Indian development based on the use of iron, which has a remarkable continuity of culture. Raymond Allchin, an archaeologist of distinction, has found the descriptions in Perumpānarrupatai very useful in identifying and explaining the Neolithic ash-mounds of South India. He has related them to the general mullai culture of the Cankam poems [36]. Viewed in terms of the function of literature within that social formation this evidence is enough to establish the historical significance of Cankam literature and the past it refers to.

More important, from the point of Vaiyapuripillai's view, are the advances made in the study of the Indian literary culture and the place of Sanskrit and Tamil within it. George Hart's study of " the shared literary themes " in ancient Tamil and Indo Aryan literature is important in this respect. The very concept of shared themes ruled out any question of "emulation of Sanskrit literature" or being at the receiving end. Going into the specific question of Hala's Sattasai, about which Vaiyapuripillai makes unjustifiably provocative statements, Hart concluded that the Sattasai came from the southern tradition [37]. Hart locates the origin in "a common popular and undoubtedly oral tradition" [38].

The concept of the shared themes should remind us also of the dynamic inter-relationship the southern religious tradition of Bhakthi had in the formulation of the Indian precept and practice of religiosity, which has attracted scholarly attention in recent times. [39]

A close analysis of Vaiyapuripillai's writing on the early Tamil

literature reveals that his concept of that literature is one of " written " literature. He has not taken into account the possibility of an oral base, if not a proto-type, for Cankam Corpus. Kailasapathy in fact starting off from a hint from Vaiyapuripillai himself that Cankam literature should be "heroic" in terms of Chadwick's "Heroic Age",[40] had argued the case for an oral literary base for Cankam poems. This has constituted a major shift of emphasis in viewing Cankam literature.

Vaiyapuripillai dismissed oral traditions and myths out of hand in considering the dates of texts. With the previously mentioned change in Indian historiography myths are now treated with some respect and are considered "inverted" history.

An attempt made to delineate another ' cultural Product ' from within the same culture, *Viz.*, drama, has shown that other cultural institutions have not been as dependent on Sanskrit as literature has been made to appear in Vaiyapuripillai's presentation of its developments.[41] In terms of the Social production of the arts, it cannot be argued that (granting fully the relative autonomy of each of the art forms), the pattern could have differed basically. The question is one of acculturation and integration and not one of borrowings and emulations.

These are some of the major developments since the death of Vaiyapuripillai which have brought about conceptual changes in the approach to Tamil literary history.

It should not however be forgotten that these conceptual changes were effected by scholars and researchers, standing firmly, as they did, on the findings of Vaiyapuripillai, especially the serialisation of the ancient Tamil literary texts, which for the first time gave a chronological span to work out the dynamics of Tamil literary and cultural formation. *So understood properly, these are only advances on Vaiyapuripillai thesis, not condemnations of it.*

The abiding value of this work lies in that it serialised the major Tamil literary works in a time sequence. In saying so, one should hasten to add the time sequence is correct, except in the case of Cilappatikaram. The amended serialisation would be that Cilappatikaram is pre-pallavan, *i.e.,* pre - 700 A.D., as is now generally accepted. This will necessitate, without dislocating the basic time sequence he has given, minor amendments in the chronological sequence of the literary works.

NOTES

1. The writer is grateful to the New Century Book House (P) Ltd. for requesting him to write this introductory note. The writer wishes to thank Thiru. S. S. Ramasamy, Vaiyapuripillai's son-in-law for readily discussing some aspects of Vaiyapuripillai's biography, and Thiru. T. M. C. Ragunathan and Thiru. R. Parthasarathy for the encouragement they gave. Thiru. Parthasarathy's comments on the first draft were very helpful.

2. Zvelabil K., *The smile of Murugan on Tamil literature of South India,* Leiden, 1973, P.339.

3. For a fuller biography of Vaiyapuripillai see Sarojini, Vaiyapuripillai Valkaikkurippukal, Madras, 1957 (Tamil).

4. I am grateful to Prof. V.I. Subramonian for giving this information.

5. Rm. Sundaram, *Vaiyapuripillaiyin Aivu Muraiyum Tiranum* in his *Col. Putitu Cuvai Putitu, Madras,* 1978.

6. S. Vaiyapuripillai Akarāti Ninaivukal, 1959, Madras, P 7.

7. Sarojini V., op. Cit. Nilakanta Sastri K. A., *A Comprehensive History of India,* Orient Longmans.

8. Vaiyapuripillai, S. Presidential Address, All India Oriental Conference, Thirteenth Session, Nagpur University, 1946, PP 125-6 (emphasis added).

9. Sivathamby K and Marcs, A., *"Bharathi Maraivu Mutal Mahakavi Varai"* N.C.B.H., Madras, 1984.

10. Vaiyapuripillai, *Tamilccutar Manikal* Madras, 1952, (PP 61-80) Vaiyapuripillai, kāviya Kālam, Madras, 1957. PP-95-164.

11. Shekhar L. Sanskrit Drama, Leiden, 1960.

12. Sivathamby K., *Vaiyapuripillai's dating of Cilappatikaram* in *Vidyodaya Journal of Arts, Science & Letters,* Vol. 5, No.182, 1972/76. Nuvegoda, Sri Lanka.

13. Subramonian V.I., *Landmarks in the history of Tamil literature,* Paper presented to IART - II Conference, Madras 1968.

14. Sivathamby K., "*Understanding the Dravidian Movement - problems and Perspectives*", Keynote Paper at the Seminar on the Dravidian Movement in Tamilnadu". Organized by N.C.B.H., Madras. (Feb., 1983)

15. Leopald Von Ranke, A German Pragmatist-Historiographer who "insisted on systemmatised erudition, inexorable logic, a scientific attention to the arrangements of facts" Allan Navin "The gateway of History". P.42.
16. Tamilcutar manikal, (Madras, 1952), P.63.
17. Vaiyapuripillai S., Kāviyakālam, (Madras, 1957), P.141.
18. Vaiyapuripillai S., *History of Tamil Language and Literature* (Madras - 1956) P. 153.
19. See Rm. Sundaram, op. cit
    Sivathamby K., Loc. cit.
    Arunachalam, *P. Cilappatikāraccintanai*
20. *Tamilcutarmanikal (P.38)* Currently the view is that Tolkappiyam is not a work of unitary authorship, Zvelabil, op cit.
21. Devaneyan, G., Thamil Ilakkiya Varalaru. (North Arcot - July 1979). In a note, he says, " Those who are qualified to write a history of Tamil literature " coming prior to the introduction to the book. (not paged)
22. ibid, P.277
23. Varadarajan M., The treatment of nature in Sangam Literature. (Madras, 1957)
24. Manikam V. Sp., The Tamil concept of Love (Madras, 1962)
25. Subramanian N., Sangam Polity, London.1966. PP. 30-32.
26. Subramanian N. An Introduction to Tamil Literature, (Madras, 1981) P. 95.
27. Mahadevan, I., Tamil Brahmi inception of the Cankam Age. IART (Madras, 1968)
28. Ibid.
29. Hart 111, G.L., The poems of Ancient Tamil. (Berkley, 1975) P. 252.

It would be interesting to know of Madhivanan's comment on Vaiyapuripillai's statement referred to in the body of this work. Madhivanan who has done a Tamil translation of the Sattasai and classified them thematically as is done traditionally in the case of Akam poems, makes a sneering reference to the fact; Vaiyapuripillai has said, Viz., Sattasai as Sanskrit literature (overlooking another fact that Vaiyapuripillai does refer to Maharashtri Prakrit) and goes on to say the following:

> "The dimensions and repercussions of literary prevarications of truth on hearsay evidences have not only misled Tamil scholars and reading public, but also tend to fantastic concept of the perpetual literary mortgage of Tamil language to Sanskrit not warranted by historical evidences and facts. For the benefit of such men in Tamil literary world, I affirm that I adopted appropriate Tamil literary thematic classifications in these love poems when rendering these translations from original Prakrit work."........

(Madhivanan, R, Antiranāttu Akanānuru - (Madras, 1978) PP. VI - VII)

This is an apt illustration of the type of attack Vaiyapuripillai had to face. As has already been made clear, the cause for all this 'righteous indignation, was because Vaiyapuripillai has said that Sanskrit too has poems of the Akam type. This quotation is also representative of the polemical stance and the sense of bravado displayed by some Tamil publicists when they were able to challenge Vaiyapuripillai successfully.

30. For the contents and extent of the discipline of Literary History see Sivathamby K., " Literary History in Tamil - a historiographical analysis " - a volume of four papers to be published by Tamil University, Thanjavur.

31. Sivathamby. K., " He responded to the call of Indian Historiography " in Tamilāram - a volume of tributes to the memory of Fr. X. S. T. Thaninayagam, (Jaffna, 1983) P.54 (emphasis added).

32. Chatterjee S.K. Dravidian (Annamalainagar, 1965) P. 49.

33. Cf. Sastri. K. A. N. called the Pre-Aryan culture in Tamil Nadu as " rather primitive and poorish " - Culture of History of the Tamils (Calcutta 1966) P. 7, and contrast this with the writings of Kamil Zvelabil and the Allchins.

34. For a description of the activities in the field of Indian historiographical studies, see Morrison, M. Barrie, " Sources, Methods and Concept in Early Indian History " in Pacific Affairs, VI, No. XLI 1968 (USA).

35. Zvelabil. K., The smile of Murugan - (leiden, 1973) P. 4. (emphasis added).

36. Allchin, F.R., Neolithic cattle keepers of South India, (1963) - P 110.

37. Hart III, George L., The Poems of Ancient Tamil Society, (Berkely, 1975) P. 252.

38. Ibid. (It is important to note that Basham has also referred to the common origin of both. He of course, locates it in the common folk song) Basham, A.L., Wonder that was India, (London, 1954) P. 461. It is worth mentioning here, the present writer has argued " that the origins of Akam poetry lie in the primitive songs of ancient South India and that the evidence for the antiquity and the continuity are seen in Hala's Saptasotaka and Toda Oral poetry" Sivathamby K., Drama in Ancient Tamil Society (Madras, 1983) P. 105. N.C.B.H. (P) Ltd.

39. Hardy, Friedhelm, Virhabhakthi - the early history of Krishna Devotion in South India, (Oxford, Delhi), 1983.

40. Kailasapathy, K., Tamil Heroic (Oxford - London), 1968. Vaiyapuripillai, Kāviya Kālam, P. 71.

41. Sivathamby K., Drama in Ancient Tamil Society, (Madras, 1981) N.C.B.H. (P) Ltd.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Prof. S. Vaiyapuripillai, B.A. B.L., was educated at the University of Madras. Though he qualified himself for law, his innate love for his mother-tongue (Tamil) beckoned him, and he entered the field of research. He also acquired sound knowledge in German, French, Sanskrit and Malayalam.

He completed Tamil Lexicon, the monumental work within a short period of 10 years. He was the Editor for "Tamil Lexicon" from 1926 to 1936. He was appointed Head of the Department in Tamil, University of Madras in 1936 which post he adorned for 10 years. After his retirement, he was invited by the University of Travancore and he occupied the Tamil Chair for 3 years from 1951 to 54. He looked at things with detachment which is so necessary to the pursuit of Truth. He had the honour of presiding twice over the All India Oriental Conference (Dravidian Language Section) held during 1946 & 1951.

He has published 15 and more volumes of rare research works in Tamil. He has edited about 40 works after collating cadjan manuscripts. His introduction and critical notes to these literary works would be highly valuable for the research scholars and the coming generations.

HIS WORKS ARE:

1. *Tamil-Chudar Manigal.*
2. *Kavya Kalam.*
3. *Ilakkiya Udayam. Vol. I & II*
4. *Tamilar Panpadu.*
5. *Tamilin Marumalarchi.*
6. *Ilakkiya Manimalai.*
7. *Kamban Kaviyam.*
8. *Ilakkiya Chintaigal.*
9. *Ilakkana Chintanaigal.*
10. *Sorkalai Virundu.*
11. *Sorkalin Charitam.*
12. *Research in Dravidian-Languages.*
13. *Sirukathai Manjari.*
14. *Ilakkiya Deepam.*
15. *Ilakkiya Vilakkam.*
16. *Raji (A Novel)*

PART I

PART I

HISTORY OF TAMIL LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

(I A.D.-300 A.D.)

ANALYSIS

1. Tamil language–its composite texture.
2. Tamil Script: its formative stage in Brahmi inscriptions.
3. Tamil people, Tamil dynasties and states. Magasthenes–Pandya story.
4. Antiquity of Tamil language on linguistic grounds.
5. Antiquity of Tamil language on literary grounds:
   - (a) Tradition.
   - (b) Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa seals.
   - (c) Nacchinarkkiniyar's *ipse dixit.*
   - (d) References in Tamil Literature:
     - i. Maurya invasion
     - ii. Pataliputra.
     - iii. Aindram.
     - iv. Origin of Chalukyas.
   - (e) Reliability of Greek testimony.
   - (f) Early Sangam literature reflects exactly the trade condition portrayed by Greek writers in 80 A.D. (Periplus) 100 A.D. may be fixed as the date for the earliest works–confirmed by Silappadikaram tradition.
   - (g) Period of development-about 3 centuries–confirmation of this by Brahmi inscriptions.

6. Study of Ettutogai–their relative chronology, spread over *three* generations.

7. Study of Pattuppāṭṭu-their relative chronology, three groups corresponding to the three generations.

8. Division into Earlier and Later Sangam literature.

9. Evidence for the date of the 2nd group of Pattuppāṭṭu works–mainly astronomical. Poets of Nakkīrar epoch. Date: 3rd century A.D.

10. Pandya and Chera lines of Kings traced back from definitely proved dates take us to the second century A.D., *i.e.,* to the date when the earliest Tamil poets flourished.

So genuine Sangam period must be the second and third centuries A.D.

11. Date of Compilation into anthologies–about the beginning of 4th century.

Date of Compilation of Pattuppāṭṭu-about 10th or 11th century.

12. Poets of the Early Sangam period– their number and other particulars.

13. Poems of the Early Sangam period–their number, nature and other particulars.

14. The love-poems of the Ancient Tamils–Is it a monopoly?

15. Evaluation of the ancient Tamil Anthologies.

HISTORY OF TAMIL LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

FROM THE BEGINNING TO 300 A.D.

Tamil Language is the oldest representative of the Dravidian group of Languages. The other languages belonging to this group are Telugu, Kannada, Malayalām, Gondi, Kolami, Kui, Karukh, Malto and Brahui. Tamil and Telugu on the east of the *Deccan* and Kannada and Malayālam on the West form one compact block. Gondi and Kolami in the Madhya Pradesh and Kui and Kurukh in Orissa and Bihar are reduced to islands which are becoming more and more broken up. Malto survives between Bihar and Bengal, north-west of the Ganges Delta, and Brāhui in Baluchistan in the midst of Iranian languages. These survivals show that the languages of the Dravidian type must have been widely spread over the whole of India. We may also surmise that the Dravidians came originally from outside India and over-ran the country, conquering the aborigines speaking Munda group of languages.

It is clear that the Tamil Language is a composite texture of three elements, *viz.*, the Munda, the Dravidian and Aryan, the Dravidian elements predominating. The word āḷ meaning man is probably of Munda origin, as it is found in Oraon, a Munda language. A comparative vocabulary of the Munda and Dravidian languages is bound to throw much light in distinguishing these several elements.

The northern groups of people, like Gonds speaking these Dravidian tongues are of a very low culture like the Gonds and the Bhils. They live next to the Munda-speaking aborigines. The Dravidians of the south on the other hand, are highly cultured and their languages gave rise to refined literatures under the influence, it is true, of Sanskrit literature. 'Telegu literature', says J. Bloch, 'is not earlier than the year 1000; the oldest Kannada text dates from about 500; Tamil literature

is doubtless older.' He also adds that all the Dravidian alphabets are derived from alphabets of Northern India of the fourth or fifth century A.D. The correctness of this statement may be questioned. Perhaps, it is safe to assume that the Dravidian alphabet was used for literary purposes about the first Century A.D. This accords well with the fact that, in the early Sangam works,[1] the word *nūl* occurs in the sense of 'literary work'. The earliest inscription in Tamil belongs to about the fifth century A.D. and is a memorial tablet to a Jain monk who gave up his life after fasting for fifty seven days.[2]. The Brāhmi inscriptions found in Tamil areas (Madurai and Tirunelveli) and assigned to third century B.C. have not generally been taken into account on palaeographical grounds in discussions on the antiquity of Tamil literature[3].

We might naturally expect that the Tamils had an ancient literature of which they might be legitimately proud. Their civilisation is of great antiquity and their ruling dynasties, played an important part in third century B.C.[4]

Even anterior to Asoka's edicts, we find references to the royal families of the Tamil country. Kātyāyana says, in his *vārttika* on Panini IV, 1, 168, that the Taddhita 'Pāndya' is applicable both to a descendant of Pandu family and to a king of the country belonging to such descendant. Under Pānini IV, 1, 175, the same author says that the term 'Chola'

[1] *e.g.*, Nedunalvādai, 1.76; Madurai-k-kāñchi, 1.645.

[2] Sen Tamil, V, p. 410

[3] Nilakanta Sastri, History of India, Part I, p.74. That the Brāhmi inscriptions relate to either Buddhist or Jain monks is one more argument in favour of the Northern origin of the Tamil Alphabet.

[4] But the pregnant statements of Prof. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri are well worth remembering: 'The short Brāhmi inscriptions in natural caverns may be assigned from their style of writing to the third century B.C. They are either brief donative records or simply the names of monks who once occupied the rock-cut beds of caverns. They have been taken to be exclusively Buddhist in origin for two reasons. They resemble closely similar records of the same age in Ceylon which, we know, difinitely went over to Buddhism. The name of Kalugumalai (Vulture Hill) where some of these caverns are found is an exact rendering of Gridhrakūta, intimately connected with the Buddhistic life. But new caverns are still being discovered and no final theory of their origin can yet be formulated. Tradition is strong that Jainism came into South India about the same time as Buddhism if not earlier. The language of these inscriptions is Tamil and its script is in its formative stages, *yu* being written for instance as *ya* followed by *u*. Their contents are still obscure in several instances. But mention is made of householder (Kutumbika) of Ceylon (Īla) as a donor and of merchants also in a like capacity.'

without any *tāddhita* modification is applicable both to the members of the Chola dynasty and to a king of the country belonging to that dynasty. Kātyāyana is usually assigned to B.C. 350. Megasthenes' mention of the Pandya country is well-known. These references show clearly that the southern dynasties were well-known in the fourth century B.C. We do not know when these dynasties came into existence. Parimēl-alagar, the reputed commentator on *Tiru-k-kural,* who may be assigned to the fourteenth century A.D. asserts[1] that the Chera, Chola and Pandya dynasties have been prominent from the time of Creation!

Antiquity of Tamil

Attempts have been made to prove the further antiquity of Tamil on linguistic grounds. For instance, Ktesias an odorous oil produced from an Indian tree having flowers like the laurel which the Greeks called ' murōrōda ' but which in India was ' kārpion '. Dr. Caldwell[2] is inclined to identify this Indian word with the Tamil-Malayalam *Karuvā* (cinnamon) and comes to the conclusion that we have here the earliest Dravidian word quoted by the Greeks. But *Karuvā* is a recent word in Tamil and bears the very suspicious appearance of being of a foreign origin. ' Karuppa ' is unknown in Tamil, unless it is assumed to be corruption of *karuppu* and there is no warrant for this assumption. Two other words much relied upon by Caldwell are the Hebrew words *tuki* for peacock and *ahalim* (aloe) occurring respectively in the Hebrew Bible in passages corresponding to ' For the king Solomon had at sea a navy of Tharsish with the navy of Hiram : once in three years came the navy of Tharsish, bringing gold, silver, ivory, and apes and peacocks ' and ' I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamons '[3] *Tuki* has been sought to be identified with the Tamil *tokai.* But the Tamil word does not mean peacock in the first instance. Its earliest meaning is only ' tail ' in general[4] and not specifically peacock's tail. In the sister languages

[1] Kural 955, Comm.

[2] A comparative Grammer of the Dravidian Language, 1915 Edn. pp. 89-91.

[3] I kings, 10,22

[4] Aham, 13,122.

also of the Dravidian group, the word has the same meaning ' tail '. Later it acquired, by figure of speech, the sense of peacock, as in *Kuruntokai* 26 and later still by constant poetic usage, its meaning was extended to beautiful woman, as in *Tōkaipāgarkku.*[1] Thus not only the respective words in Tamil and Hebrew do not agree in meaning; but the etymology of Caldwell is highly doubtful. Then again Hebrew *ahalim* is sought to be identified with Tamil *agil.* But the Tamil word is of a later date than Sanskrit *agaru* and Caldwell himself admits the possibility of connection between the Hebrew and the Sanskrit word. He suggests also that the word might have some connection with the Tamil *alagu.* But *Alagu* is rare word in ancient Tamil and does but occur twice in the earliest literature.[2] It is not found in other Dravidian languages. Apart from geographical names adopted by Greek writers, *arisi* (rice) seems to be the only Tamil word borrowed by the Greeks. But here also we cannot shut our eyes to the possibility of *arisi* or its earlier form *ari* being of Sanskrit origin, *(vrīhi).*[3] Dr. W. Graefe informs me that *Oryza* may be quite indigenous in the Greek language, since rice is growing wild in the Southern Balkans (Macedonia and other places). The Greeks must have had a word for this plant growing in their own regions. Caldwell's statement that the Malayalam word *ari* is a corruption is clearly wrong, as it is found in the earliest Tamil literature,[4] and in Kannada and Tulu. Even if the Greek word *Oryza* is ultimately proved to be of Tamil origin, the date of its borrowing is not ascertainable.

Leaving such linguistic speculation and turning our attention to literature, we may note that the date of the Brāhmi inscriptions gives us a limit beyond which it may not be possible to go. Literature can thrive only when the art of writing has come into general practice among the learned. When the alphabet itself is in its formative stages, it is hardıy possible for literature even to germinate. So we have to conclude that there was no Tamil literature in the accepted sense of the term, in the third century B.C., if we accept the date generally assigned to the Brāhmi inscriptions. But the traditional view is that there existed

[1] Kamban: Tiruvavatara, 10.
[2] Perum-pān, 1. 252. It gains in frequency as time passes on. Tolkāppiar gives this word.
[3] Przyluski, *Nom. du Riz, Etudes Asiatiques.*
[4] Malaipadu-kadam, 1.413.

three Tamil Sangams or Academies in which Tamil literary works were ' heard ' and assessed, the first academy lasting for 4,440 years, the second for 3,700 years and the third for 1,850 years. Altogether these three Sangams lasted for 9,990 years. Since scholars hold that the last phase of the third Sangam was coeval with the beginning of the Christian Era, the First Sangam, according to this tradition, must have come into existence about B.C. 10,000! This tradition, is recorded in *Iṛaiyanār Ahapporul*, a work perhaps of the 13th century. Gods also are said to have participated in the deliberations of the first Sangam! We may leave such fables alone and seek for historical truth elsewhere.

However, in this traditional account, a certain poet, Muranjiyūr Mudināgarāyar is said to have been a member of the First Academy. To this poet is ascribed the second stanza of *Puṟanānūṟu,* (one of the earliest collections of poems) in which a Chera King is said to have fed impartially both the contending armies of the Mahabharata battle. It is argued from this that the poet, the academy and the king were all contemporaneous with the Great battle which is believed to have taken place at the beginning of the Kaliyuga, *i.e.,* 3102 B.C. Hence Tamil literature, the protagonists of this view say, must have its beginnings anterior to 3102 B.C.

Not even the most extensive redaction of the great epic contains this story about *the Chera* monarch. The Tamil poem is in fact just an eulogy on the benevolence of the King and nothing more. Says Winternitz[1] ' Indian Kings were just as fond of tracing their ancestry back to those who fought in the Bharata battle, as European princes were anxious to prove their descent from the heroes of the Trojan war '. (cf. Rapson, Cambridge History, 1. p. 307) ' I consider it as entirely contrary to historical criticism to draw chronological conclusions........from this fiction '.

Some scholars have persuaded themselves that the inscribed seals from the Indus Valley support the high antiquity of Tamil. But as Patrick Carleton has observed, ' neither Prof. Langdon nor any other responsible authority has ventured to decide in

History of Indian Literature, Vol. I, p. 523.

what language the inscriptions are written, still less to offer a translation.'[1]

References in Tamil literature have also been pressed into service to prove its high antiquity. One such instance occurs in Nachchinārkiniyar's commentary on *Nānmaṛai* in the prefatory verse to *Tolkāppiyam.* He says that Tolkāppiyam was written long before Vyāsa shaped the Vedas into four great collections. But such legendary views can hardly find favour in the eyes of sober history. A second instance is furnished by the stanzas purporting to refer to the *Mōriyas* and *Nandas,* as well as *Kōsar* and *Mōhūr.*[2] These references have been discussed fully elsewhere.[3] We need only stress here that it is very doubtful if these references are to the historical Mauryas and that, in any case, there is nothing to show that the references are to contemporary events. No support can therefore be got from these stanzas for a date anterior to the Christian Era for the Sangam literature.

One other reference has been made much of by some Tamil scholars. In the prefatory stanza of *Tolkāppiyam,* the oldest extant Tamil grammer, Tolkāppiyar its author, is referred to as one thoroughly versed in *Aindram.* As *Aindram* is deemed to be one of the pre-Pāninīan systems and as Pānini is generally assigned to B.C. 4th or 5th century, it is argued that Tolkāppiyar must have composed his great work at least in the 5th century B.C. There must have been a considerable body of Tamil literature before Tolkāppiyar and this literature must be of far greater antiquity. True; but the argument is reared on wrong premises.[4] Aindra was not the name of any particular work, but the name of a grammatical system ascribed to God Indra.[5] It is Pre-Pāninīan; but the name ' Aindra ' itself is post-Pāninīan and Pānini does not mention it. The *Aindra* system continued to exist long after Pānini followed by the Jainas and some others. *Kātantra,* variously assigned to 3rd or 4th century A.D. is a representative of the system.[6]

[1] Buried Empires: W. Edwin Arnold & Co., 1944, p. 141.
[2] Puram. 175; Aham. 69, 251, 281.
[3] Ilakkiya Deepam: pp. 131-144.
[4] For a full discussion of the subject, see my Tamil Chudarmanigal, pp. 27-39.
[5] Belvelkar: Systems of Sanskrit Grammar, p. 11
[6] Keith, Sanskrit Literature, p. 431.

That the *Tolkāppiyam* is directly indebted to Pānini is quite clear. For instance Panini II, 3, 18 is followed in *Tolkāppiyam* II, 557; Panini VII, 3, 107 is Tamilised in Tolkāppiyam II, 761. In a relatively late work, a sloka has been altered in *Tolkāppiyam* II, 575 in consonance with Tamil literary usage. Even from Paniniya Siksha rendered in Tamil by Tolkāppiyar (Tolkāppiyam I, 83), Patanjali's *Mahabhashya* is also laid under contribution. For instance, Patanjali classified compounds (samāsas) into four kinds according to the place where their sense becomes full and significant, viz., *Pūrvapadārtha pradhānah, Uttara-padārtha pradhānah, Anyapadārtha pradhānah* and *Ubhaya padārtha pradhānah*. This classification is adopted by Tolkāppiyar and the terms are literally translated in his grammer (II, 419). He also indicates by adding ' enba ' that this matter has been taken from some ancient authority. *Manu* has been studied and utilised by Tolkāppiyar in regard to certain social prescriptions. (Compare Manu III, 46, 47 and Tolkāppiyam III, 185). This will give Tolkāppiyar a date posterior to A.D. 200. Kautilya's *Artha Sāstra* has also furnished material to *Tolkāppiyam (e.g.,* enumeration of 32 uktis at the end of both the works). But as Kautilya's date is a disputed point, we may leave this out of account. Lastly, Tolkāppiyar is much indebted to *Bharata Nātya Sastra* and *Vatsyayana's Kamasutra.* I need only mention the eight rasas (Nātya VI, 15) and Eight Meippādu (Tolkāppiyam III, 3) and the *daśāvasthās* (Kama V, 1=Tolkappiyam III, 97).[1] This gives us a date perhaps later than fourth century A.D. Considering all these, the earliest date to which Tolkāppiyar may be assigned is fifth century A.D. The famous Sangha of Vajranandi was established in A.D. 470 and perhaps *Tolkāppiyam* was its first literary output. This accords well with the fact that its author uses (III, 133) the word ' orai ' (Sanskrit Hora) which is a Greek word borrowed in Sanskrit astrological works about third or fourth century A.D.

A reference in *Puṟanāṉūṟu* has been much canvassed to support a late date 10th century A.D. for the earliest of the extant works of Tamil literature. In stanza 201 of this collection, Kapilar says of Irungō-vēl that he is a chieftain of the family of *Vēlirs* whose progenitor, forty-nine generations before, made

[1] Kielhorn I, pp. 379-380, 382, 392.

his advent out of the sacrificial pit of a northern sage and ruled Dvaraka. It looks plausible that this tradition refers to the origin of the Chalukyas.[1] An inscription of Yuvarāja II of the Kalachuri dynasty which used an era beginning from A.D. 249 mentions a similar tradition. In *Bhilhana's Vikramanka Deva Charita* (Chapter I, slokas 31-36), the same tradition is recorded. There are also other records of the tradition.[2] The conflicting versions of this wide-spread tradition in the several records raise a doubt as to its applicability to the Chalukyas alone. In the same *Puram* stanza and in the next (202) the hero is called (Pulikatimāl', meaning 'the great one who vanquished the tiger'. This reminds us of the term ' Hoysala ', a name applied to a line of kings who at one time professed allegiance to Chalukyas. Even assuming that the fire pit tradition relates to the Chalukyas, we do not know when it originated and whence. The founder of the dynasty is believed to be Pulikesan I, who in A.D. 543 converted Bādāmi into a strong hill-fortress and performed an *asvamēda*. One would naturally expect the tradition to have started from this king. But the references to Dvaraka, the capital of Krishna, suggesting probably that he also hailed from this family of Vēlirs carries the tradition far, far back and we may not be wide of the mark if we assign this commencement to about the second century A.D. at least. It might very well be that the tradition in *Puranānuru* referred to the origin of some other-earlier dynasty whose identity still remains in the dark. Anyway to accept the 10th Century theory on this basis is to throw over-board the entire history and development of Tamil Language and Literature. This theory may be dismissed as summarily as that of the three Sangams.

Greek Testimony

It is only the Greek writers of the first and second centuries A.D. who furnish us with reliable data for fixing the antiquity of Tamil literature. The port of Alexandria became a great city in the Hellenistic age and it enjoyed an almost ideal situation as an emporium of trade between Europe and the East, especially India. About 200 B.C. there was little direct trade with India.

[1] K.A.N. Sastri's History of India, Part I, p. 193.
[2] Indian Antiquary, VII, 74; Bombay Gazetteer IV, 339 Ep. Ind. XV, p. 106.

But when Rome absorbed the remnants of Alexander's empire before the beginning of the Christian Era and Augustus became emperor and settled down to organise and regulate his vast possessions, the whole aspect changed. Piracy was put down, and trade routes were secured; the fashionable world of Rome demanded oriental luxuries of every kind. One of the results was the increased intercourse with India and consequently there appeared several works bearing more or less directly upon Indian geography and trade. Of these, the earliest was written by Strabo, an Asiatic Greek who wrote his Geographica in the first quarter of the first century A.D. He describes how Indians capture elephants and long-tailed apes. Mention is also made by him of an ambassador sent to Augustus on his accession by an important king called Pōrus by some, and Pāndian by others.[1] Critics incline with good reason to the view that it must be Porus a generic name with Greek writers for an Indian king. But Strabo had to rely for his information about India mainly upon previous writers. The few bold sailors who went as far as the mouth of the Ganges and who could give information were ignorant men, ill-qualified to describe what they had seen. The epoch-making discovery about 45 A.D. of the existing monsoon winds, blowing regularly across the Indian Ocean was made by a captain of the name Hippalus. After this, trade between Egypt and India increased in frequency and volume. As a consequence, works of a more reliable character began to appear. Pliny the Elder set to work at his encyclopaedic Natural History and completed it in the year 77 A.D. The sixth book of this history contains a valuable description of Ceylon and an interesting account of a voyage to the Indian coast. He tells us that passengers preferred to embark at Barake in the Pandya country, rather than at Muziris on account of pirates.[2] Barake was the port for the pepper trade, Kottonara (Kuttanad) the centre of the pepper area.

About the same time (*c.* 80 A.D.) and anonymous pamphlet entitled *Periplus Maris Erythraei* was published probably at Alexandria. This little book is unique in the history of Greek

[1] Rawlinson: India and the Western World, pp. 107-8
[2] Rawlinson, *op. cit. pp. 111-12.*

geography, in so far as the writer describes the coasts of the Red sea, Arabia and *Western India* from his own experience and not at second hand as other extant authorities do. The last of the great geographers to write about India, if we exclude minor authorities and incidental references, is Ptolemy. He lived about 150 A.D. But Ptolemy's guide to geography is mathematical rather than descriptive. His object is not to describe places but to determine their latitude and longitude on the map and his notices are occasional and brief. We shall follow the Periplus. In the Tamil country, Damirike, the chief ports were Muziris in the country of Kerobothra or Keralaputra, the Western Tamil kingdom and Nelcynda in the kingdom of Pandya (Pandion) or Madura. The latter became–about the time when Periplus was written–the most important of the Indian ports. The chief reason for this is the pepper trade for which after the discovery of Hippalus it became the chief port. Later on, it completely eclipsed even Barugaza, the modern Broach. The exports from Nelcynda were multifarious. Pepper and other condiments, drugs like spikenard and malobathrum, jewels like beryls, pearls, diamonds and sapphires, ivory and silk from Bengal and tortoise-shell were the chief articles. The great volume of the trade with South India in the first Century A.D. is evidenced by the great numbers of Roman coins found there. The *Peutinger Tables*[1] represent the temple of Augustus at Muziris. Ptolemy tells us of meeting people who had resided in the Madura district ' for a long time '. Further than Nelcynda the *Periplus* records many valuable facts about the east coast of India as far as the mouth of the Ganges, probably collected from other travellers in these regions. Cape Kumari is mentioned and there we are told was a shrine and monastery where men and women dedicated themselves to a life of chastity in honour of the virgin Goddess of the place and performed ablutions. In the Coromandal coast, Kamara, the Khaveris emporium of Ptolemy, at the mouth of the Kaveri, Poduca, generally identified with Puduchery or Pondicherry, and Sopatma, *i.e.,* Supatana are the ports mentioned. In the last named port, there was a flourishing trade in pearls and muslins, and ships from Bengal frequently put in. Sangara or Catamarans and Kolundia, large sea-going

[1] The Tabula Peutingariana (so called from the name of the 16th century scholar who published it) is a strip 21 feet by 1 foot showing the course of Roman roads in distorted form.

vessels made of logs were the usual carriers. To the Coromandal coast, states the author of the *Periplus,* went a very large proportion of the exports from Rome. We may close this short account with observing that the trade between India and Rome continued to thrive steadily during the second and third centuries A.D. After Septimus Severus (211 A.D.) the Roman coins in South India dwindled rapidly.

The significance of the above history of early commerce will be apparent when we look into some of the stanzas in the Sangam collections. There are ten references to Yavanas in the Sangam literature. In one of these *(Mullai-p-pāttu 66)*, they are referred to under the generic appellation ' Mlechchās ' and in two others, *(Neḍunalvāḍai 31-5, Puram, 343)* the context leaves no doubt that they are the people referred to in the verses. The other seven references[1] are explicit. The Yavanas served as bodyguards to kings[2] and as palace-guards during nights.[3] They enjoyed leisure in decorating themselves, in drinking and in walking the streets of the cities during evenings, altogether unmindful of the drizzling rain.[4] This soldierly life was not their only attraction. Commercial interest was even more powerful. Many of the sea-faring Yavanas were merchants. They brought from their distant home lamps of fine workmanship, swan-shaped and woman-shaped,[5] and sold them to kings, of course at great profit. They came with gold and wine in their vessels and returned with pepper[6] which was in great demand at Rome and which fetched extraordinary price. The ports which these Yavana merchants frequented are also mentioned in the Sangam literature. An *Aham* stanza (149) mentions the flourishing Musiri where the Yavanas come in their finely-shaped vessels loaded with gold specie agitating to foam the waters of the great river Chuḷḷi, and returned freighted with pepper. Another stanza from the same collection (57) describes this Musiri as a sea-port. A *Puṟam* stanza (343) says that the pepper heaped in house-yards

[1] *Mullai,* 1. 61; Perum-pān, 1. 316; padiruppattu II Padigam; Aham 57, 149; Nedunal 11. 101-2; Puṟam 56.

[2] *Mullai,* 1. 66.

[3] *Mullai,* 1. 61.

[4] Nedunal, 11. 31-35.

[5] Perum-pān, 316-319, Nedunal, 101-2.

[6] Aham, 149, Puram, 56,343.

in Musiri are put in bags and these bags make the shore groan with weight. Further it says that the gold (specie) which the sea-going vessels bring are taken ashore by the small crafts plying in backwaters. Another port which we find mentioned in these works is Tondi and there are as many as twenty-four references to it. In all these stanzas however, we do not gain any historical information except that it was a flourishing sea-port (munturai: *Kurum,* 128) belonging to the Cheras on the West Coast.

The references to Musiri, it should be noted, are in the present tense and we may legitimately infer that the poets in whose poems they occur lived at a period when that famous sea-port became commercially important and was consequently much frequented by Yavana merchants. The southern ports as we have already seen became the centre of commercial activity only after the discovery of the monsoons by Hippalus in c. 45 A.D. The *Periplus* was written about 80 A.D.[1] The Yavana trade declined about 200 A.D. Considering the fact that the literary references to Musiri tally exactly with what was recorded in *Periplus* about this ancient port, the conculsion is forced upon us that the poets who made these references lived between 100 A.D. and 250 A.D. No doubt the limit is only approximate, but this is as near the truth as we can ever hope to reach.

This conclusion is strengthened by a recorded tradition. The *Silappadikāram,* one of the *Pancha Kāvyas,* says that when King Senguṭṭuvan, a celebrated king of the Sangam period had raised a temple to Kannagi, made grants of lands, etc., to the deity and arranged for her daily puja, he went round the temple and stood at its entrance paying obeisance. Then King Gajabhāhu of Ceylon and other kings prayed in the presence of the great king (Senguṭṭuvan) that the goddess might be pleased to sanctify with her presence the festival which they were going to conduct in her honour in their respective capitals. The prayer was granted[2]. This traditiion makes Senguṭṭuvan a contemporary of King Gajabhāhu of Ceylon, presumably the first of this name.

[1] It is fairly certain that the Periplus was written between 80 and 90 A.D. and nearer 80 than 90: Rawlinson, p. 106, f.n.

[2] Silappadikarām II. 151-164.

According to Geiger, this king ruled from 171 to 193 A.D. Hence Senguṭṭuvan who according to *Padirṟuppattu (V)* ruled for 55 years, may be roughly assigned to 170-226 A.D. He was the grandson of Udiyan-Sēralāthan and calculating at the average of 25 years per ruler, the latter must have lived in *c.* 130 A.D. We may be reasonably certain that the chronological conclusion reached above is historically sound and no poet of Sangam Age seems to be earlier than the second century A.D.

Period of Development

We are as yet far from the beginning of Tamil literature. Before the second century A.D. there must have been crude attempts at literary expressions and these attempts must have been going on for a pretty long time. Moreover, the style, the diction and metrical perfection of the Sangam poems require for their development a considerably long period. At a rough computation, we may put this period of development as three centuries.

Looking back beyond these long centureis, we sight a period when the Brahāmi inscriptions were in vogue. They show the Tamil script in its formative stage and from this stage upto its full development and its adaptation for literary purposes, the above estimate allows sufficient interval. Development in language, script and literature must have been going on at a rapid pace. Powerful influences must have been at work during this period as evidenced by the Brāhmi inscriptions themselves. The words Kuṭumbika, Īḷa and the circumstances in which the inscriptions were written tell their own tale. Contact with Sanskrit and Prākrit languages and literature, with adjacent countries like Ceylon, and with the Buddhist and the Jaina religions must have been largely influential in shaping the Tamil mind. The continuous influx of people from the North also must have had its influence. The Tamil language must have received new tributaries in its stream. Thus the even tenor of the life of the ancient Tamilian was ruffled and invigorated, a desire was created in him to emulate the Sanskrit literature. The religious and moral side of the ancient Tamilian was given a new turn by the influences noted above. The secular side remained uninfluenced and it went on very much as before. The earliest literature would have necessarily its root deep in the native soil of the Tamils and this literature must have been

in verse. In the literature transmitted to us, poetry is found in every country to precede prose. Lyrics, songs and panegyrics must have taken precedence.

The Tamil literature in its beginnings must for ever remain a matter for speculation. During the first decade of the present century, a small work (of about ten pages of demy 16mo) bearing the title Sengonrarai-c-celavu appeared in print, claiming to be a production of First Tamil Sangam and its was said to have been composed in tāppulippā meter! The spurious nature of the work was soon found out and no responsible scholar took any serious notice on it. The commentary on Iraiyanar Ahapporul has, in its description of the literary activities of the first two Sangams, mentioned a number of works which are nothing more than mere names. The semi-mythical character of the account puts these works beyond the pale of historical investigation. Again Adiyārkkunallār in his commentary on Silappadikāram has given us the names of a few works. But these are works treating of the same subject matter as Bharata Nātya Sāstra and apparently they are of late origin. However, Tolkāppiyar is of some help in this connection. He mentions certain genre or types of literary composition, of which we have no representative at present. His commentators are hard put to find examples and no writer, since his time, has mentioned these types; barring grammarians who have transmitted faithfully what they had learnt from his work. Of such genre, I may mention ' *angadam* ', a kind of lampoon, *pisi,* a kind of riddle-poem, and *paṇṇatti* whose nature is not now known. There must have also been a number of works in Ahaval meter ending in consonants like ñ, etc., similar to the Silappadikaram and the Manimekalai, works embodying stories of ancient times known as 'tonmai' and works in mixed prose and verse. Tolkappiyar speaks of translations also; but we are not vouchsafed any information as regards the language from which the translations were made. Probably he is referring to the Sanskrit and Prakrit languages. Even these types mentioned by Tolkappiyar are of an advanced nature. The primitive Tamil literature remains a mystery as much as ever and our guesses must follow in general the line of origin and development of literature all over the world.

Ettutogai

The earliest literature we have in Tamil consists of anthologies of short lyrics and longer poems. The lyrics are made into eight collections known as *Eṭṭutogai* and the longer poems are collected under the name of *Pattup-pāṭṭu*. These names occur in the ancient commentary on *Nannūl* (s v. 387) of about the 14th century. Pērāśiriyar (14th century) one of the commentators on *Tolkāppiyam* refers to these collections simply as Tokai and Pāttu.[1] The eight collections are:–

1. *Narriṇai*
2. *Kuṛundogai*
3. *Ainguṛunūru*
4. *Padirṛu-p-pattu*
5. *Paripādal*
6. *Kalittogai*
7. *Ahanānūṛu*
8. *Puṛanānūru*

Of these the first three, the sixth and the seventh collections treat of love-themes technically known as *'aham'*, in its several aspects. Such love aspects, *'tinais'* have been classified into five sections, *viz. kurinji* or pre-marital love, *marudam* or post-marital love, *mullai* or the patient suffering of the wife (during her lord's separation) in eager expectancy of his return, *neydal,* or the lamentations of the lovers in separation and *pālai,* or pangs of love both of the wife and her lord during separation. The fourth and the eighth have for the subjects non-love themes, technically called *'puṛam'* which includes heroism in war, liberality, just rule, praises of gods and of men. The fifth in the series, *viz, Paripāḍal* partakes of the nature of both, some songs being in praise of gods, others in depiction of love.

We shall now deal with the eight collections. The collection *Narriṇai* consists of 400 stanzas, the lines in each stanza ranging from 9 to 12. This includes poems by 175 poets. In the only edition of the work, stanza 234 is missing altogether. The anthology was made under the patronage of a certain king Pannāḍutanda-māṛan-vaḻudi. This king, it may be noted, was also the author of *Narriṇai* 97, and 301, and of *Kuṛundogai* 270.

[1] Comm. Seyyuliyal, 50, 80.

The latter collection *Kuṟundogai* was made by one Pūrikkō; but the king who patronised the collection is not separately given. This includes poems by 205 poets. Under the original scheme it must have had 400 stanzas of 4 to 6 lines each, though Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer's edition has 401 stanzas. Perhaps one of its stanzas, either 307 or 391 which exceed the line-limit may have belonged to *Naṟṟiṇai*. These two collections most probably were made about the same time, Kurundogai perhaps being the earlier.

Ain-guṟu-nūṟu (the five short hundred) perhaps the earliest of the anthologies consists of five sections of 100 stanzas each, pertaining to five *tinais* of *aham*. The poet *Ōrambōgi* composoed the centum on *Marudam,* Ammūvan on *Neydal,* Kapilar on *Kuriñji,* Ōdal-āntai on *Pālai,* and *Pēyan* on Mullai. The work was compiled by Pulatturai-muṟṟiya-Kūdalur-Kiḻār under the royal patronage of Yānai-k-kat-chēi-māndaram-jēral-Irumpoṟai, the elephant-eyed Chera. The latter's death is bemoaned by the above poet in *Puṟam 229.* Hence it is certain that *Ainguṟunūṟu* was collected earlier than *Puṟanānūṟu.* There exists an old commentary on the work.

Padiṟṟu-p-pattu, 'the ten tens', is a collection of 100 stanzas divided into 10 sections, each section dealing with the exploits and achievements of a king of the Chera dynasty. We have lost the first and the last tens of this work and with them a good deal of valuable historical material.

Each ten has got at the end a *padigam* (Skt: pratika), an epilogue which gives some details about the life of the hero of the decade, the name of the poet and also the fabulous reward he obtained. That this *padigam* is a later addition is clear from the fact that it is not found in manuscripts containing the text alone. Each stanza is named after a peculiar phrase occurring in it.

Paripādal consists of 70 poems, the collection itself being named after the particular variety of stanza employed in it. It has survived only in a fragment of about twenty-two poems. An old verse says that it contained 8 stanzas on Vishnu, 31 on Muruga, one on Kādukiḻal, *i.e.,* Kali, (or according to another reading Kadal sea), 26 on the river Vaigai and 4 on the city of Madurai. The most notable feature of this collection is that each stanza contains in its colophon besides the name of its

author, the name of the musician who set it to music and of the melody to which it is set. The existing stanzas on the Vaigai show that love was their predominant theme, the river and its floods serving as a background. Nothing is known about the poet responsible for this collection or his patron. A learned commentary attributed to the well-known parimel-aḻagar exists in fragments.

Kalittogai consists of 150 inclusive of the invocatory stanzas in the metre known as Kali. The stanzas are distributed unevenly among the five *tinais, pālai* having 35 stanzas, *Kuṟiñji 29, marudam 35, mullai 17, and neydal 33.* That this collection was made by Nallanduvanār is quite clear from the concluding lines of Nachinārk-kiniyar's commentary on the work. The poet Nallanduvanār was also the author of the *neydal* section as may be inferred from the commentary on its 25th stanza. But whether he was also the author of the other sections, we have no means of determining. The style and diction and certain other peculiarities indicate that he was most probably the author of the entire work. However a stanza is quoted ascribing the five sections of the work to five different authors. This stanza is *not* found in manuscripts and is therefore of modern origin. Nachinārk-kiniyar's excellent commentary is available in full.

Ahanāṉūṟu is a collection of 400 stanzas on love as its name indicates but it contains, besides, an invocatory stanza. It consists of poems by 145 poets. The number of lines to a stanza range from 13 to 31. The stanzas which are serially numbered are arranged according to a definite scheme. All the stanzas bearing odd numbers belong to *pālai;* all the stanzas have the number 10 or multiples of 10, 20, etc., belong to *neydal;* the stanzas having the number 4 (4, 14, 24, etc.) belong to *mullai;* the stanzas having the numbers 2 and 8 (2, 8, 12, 18, 22, etc.) belong to *Kuṟiñgi;* and the stanzas having the number of 6 (6, 16, 26, etc.) relate to *marudam.* In *Naṟṟinai* and *Kuṟundogai* the tinais of the stanzas are not indicated; consequently no scheme is adopted with regard to their arrangement. This shows that *Ahanānūṟu* was collected later than *Naṟṟinai and Kuṟundogai.* It may also be noted that *Nedundogai* another name for Ahananuṟu is modelled upon the name Kuṟundogai. This is a further indication of the fact that *Ahanānūṟu* is a later collection. Uruttirasanmar, son of Madurai Uppūri-kuḍi-kiḻar was the compiler, and Pāndyan Ukkira-p-peruvaḻudi caused the

compilation to be made. Quite a legend has grown around the names of the poet and the king and this legend is given in full in the opening paragraphs of the commentary on *Iṟaiyanār Ahapporuḷ*. But this we may pass over at present. To the king is attributed stanza 26 of *Ahanānūṟu* and 98 of *Naṟṟiṇāi*. There is an old commentary, valuable but meagre, for the first 90 stanzas.

Puṟanānūṟu is the last in the traditional series of Sangam collections and excepting *Padiṟṟuppattu,* the most valuable from the historical standpoint. It contains as its name indicates, 400 stanzas. The editor includes the invocatory stanza in making up the total and records that two stanzas (267 and 268) are missing. It might be that 3 poems are missing and in that case, we would have 400 poems exclusive of the invocatory stanza. There is an old commentary upto stanza 266. In the subsequent poems, the text is in some places corrupt and there are lacunae here and there. In some poems the colophons are entirely missing. Of the extant poems, 14 are available without any indication of the occasion for the song. The poets represented in this collection number 157 and the number of kings, chieftains, etc., who are mentioned in it comes to 128.

The following as the most probable chronological order of the collections may be suggested:–

(1) Ainguṟunūṟu, (2) Kuṟundogai, (3) Naṟṟiṇai, (4) Padiṟṟuppattu, (5) Ahanānūṟu, (6) Puṟanānūṟu.

This will be discussed in detail later.

Of the eight collections, there are two, *Paripādal* and *Kalittogai,* which have not been assigned places in the chronological scheme given above. They have been briefly noticed already; but a detailed study reveals the fact that they stand apart in a different category. They do not seem to have any sort of connection with the other six collections. None of the poets who are the authors of the *Paripāḍal* figure among the poets of other anthologies. It might be urged that Nallanduvanār and Ilamperuvaḻudi occur in Aham 43, 59 and *Puṟam* 182. But we have to note that in *Aham* 43 the poet's name is Madurai Āsiriyar Nallanduvanār and the adjunct Madurai indicates a different poet. In *Aham* 59, the name Anduvan alone occurs and not Nallanduvanār; the commentator on the poem says

merely that he was a poet and does not identify him with the poet figuring in *Paripāḍal*. The author of *Puṟam* 182, is Kadalul-māynda-Iḷamperu-vaḻudi and not Iḷamperu-vaḻudi simply. Moreover, the former poet seems to have been a Jain, as the plural 'Indirar' and the highly ethical tone of the poem indicates. Hence the two Vaḻudis could never be identical. Moreover, the percentage of Sanskrit words and expressions borrowed in the *Paripaḍal* and their nature betray its late origin. The following may be noted: *Kavitai (6), ārādanai (6), aruchippōrum (8), punti (11), mithunam (11), pañgu (11), vēdiyar (11) panḍāram (11), tālam (11), cindikka (20),* vandikka *(20),* vāchiyam *(20), śurungai (20), amirtapānam (8)* and *mallikāmālai (11).* It should be specially noted that these occur mostly in Nallanduvanār's poems. Besides, very late forms in the History of Tamil language are found in this work, instances being; *Āmām (6), Nān (6)*

From all this we may legitimately conclude that the two collections, *Paripāḍal* and *Kalittogai* are separated from the earlier collections at least by two or three centuries. Hence we are entirely justified in classifying the so-called Sangam literature into the earlier Sangam works and the later Sangam works.

Another point also may be noted. These poems are generally called Sangam poems and the collections are called Sangam anthologies. We shall adopt this nomenclature. But there is a clear distinction between the Sangam poems and the Sangam anthologies Chronologically the poems are much earlier and the anthologies could have been compiled only later. We must bear this distinction in mind and never lose sight of it. In the earliest period with which we are now dealing, we are concerned only with the Sangam poems and not with the anthologies.

Pattuppattu

Thus far, we have dealt with the eight anthologies, we shall now take up *Pattuppāṭṭu* (' Ten Idylls ') another collection of ten longer poems. The collective name must have come into use only after the collection had been made. A late work *Panniru-p-paṭṭiyal* perhaps of the 11th or 12th century A.D. describes the nature of this *Pattu-p-pāṭṭu,* so far as length and metre are concerned.

The first poem of this collection is *Murugāṟṟu-p-paḍai,* consisting

of 317 lines. Its author is nakkīrar. It serves perhaps as an invocatory poem for the collection. The second is *Porunār-ārru-p-paḍai,* consisting of 248 lines. its author is Mudattāmakkanniyār and the hero of the poem is *Karikār-peru-valattān*. The third is *Sirupānārruppadai,* containing 269 lines. Its author is Nallūr Nattattanār and its hero is Nalliyiakkoḍan. This poem refers to the seven Vaḷḷals of the Sangam Age. The fourth poem is *Perumbānārrupadai* containing 500 lines. Its author is Kaḍiyalūr-uruttiran-gaṇṇanār and its hero is Tonḍaimān-Iḷantiraiyan. The fifth in the collection is *Mullai-p-paṭṭu* consisting of 103 lines. This is the shortest poem in this anthology. The author is Nappūdanār and he refers to *mlechchhās (Yavanas)* in lines 60-66. The sixth poem is *Madurai-k-kāñji* containing 782 lines. This is the longest poem of this anthology. The author is Māngudi-maruda-nār and the hero of the poem is Talayālan-kānattu-chcheru-venra-Neḍuñjeḷiyan. Nannan is mentioned in line 618 to 619 and Onam festival in line 591. The seventh in this collection is *Neḍunalvaḍai* consisting of 188 lines. Its author is Nakkīrar. The hero of the poem is the above mentioned Neḍunjeḷiyan himself. This poem is also refers to mlechchhās (31 to 35). The eighth of series is *Kuriñji-p-pattu.* It consists of 261 lines and its author is Kapilar. The colophon says that this poem was written to show the excellence of Tamil and Tamilian courtship to an Aryan king Pirahattan (Brahasta) by name. It may also be noted that the poet Kapilar is referred to by nakkīrar in *Aham* 78 and 141. The ninth poem is *paṭṭina-p-pālai.* This consists of 301 lines. Its author is Kaḍiyalūr Uritiranganṇanār and its hero is karikāl-p-peruvaḷattan. the tenth and last poem is *Malaipaḍu-kaḍām* consisting of 583 lines. Its author is perungausi-kanār of Perungunrūr in Iraṇiya-muṭṭam. The hero of the poem is Nannan, son of Nannan.

Most of these poems belong to the class of composition known as ' *ārrupaḍai* '. A poet who visited a patron and has received bounty at his hands, returns home and on his way, he meets with another poet with his retinue in a very poverty-stricken condition. He directs him to the patron, describing the way which would lead to the patron's residence and describing the reception which he would get. Tolkāppiyar specifically mentions the varieties of this kind of poem. He gives no place to a poem like *Murugārruppaḍai* in which a devotee *(Bhakta)* is directed to go to his chosen deity.

From these details certain facts emerge. *Porunār-ārrup-padai* and *Paṭṭinappaālai* are sung in honour of Karikāl-peru-vaḷattān and the author of *Paṭṭina-p-pālai* is also the author of *Perumpaṉ-arru-p-padai.* Hence these three works must have been composed about the same time. *Madurai-k-kāñji* and *Neḍunalvāḍai* have been composed in praise of Neḍunjeḻiyan of Talayalangānam fame. Hence these two works may be considered to have been composed by contemporary poets. The hero of the poem *Malaipaḍukkaḍām,* Nannan's son Nannan, is referred to in *Madurai-k-kāñji,* lines 318 to 319. So this work also must be considered contemporaneous with the above two works. Kapilar, the author of *Kuriñji-p-paṭṭu* is, as we have referred to by Nakkīrar in Aham 78 and so, *Kuriñji-p-paṭṭu* must have been composed earlier than *Nedunalvaḍai* and *Madurari-k-kāñji.* There is no clue throwing any light on the relative date of *Mullai-p-pāttu.* Possibly, *Mullai-p-paṭṭu* is very close to *Neḍunalvaḍai* as both these works refer to the *milechchas.* The few parallel passages in these two works confirm this view. *Sirupānārrup-paḍai,* as has already been mentioned, refers to the Seven Vaḷḷals in the past tense. These patrons of learning have been praised by Paranar, Kapilar, Muḍamosiyār, Avvaiyār and others. We may take it that this poem *Sirupāṇārrup-paḍai* was composed subsequent to the period when these poets flourished. It was composed, most probably, last in the series of *Pattuppāṭṭu* poems, *Murug-ārrup-paḍai* excepted. The following order covers the facts noted above:–

I
1. *Porunar-ārrup-paḍai.*
2. *Perumbāṇ-ārrup-paḍai.*
3. *Paṭṭinap-pālai.*
4. *Kuriñjip-pāṭṭu.*

II
5. *Malaipaḍukaḍām.*
6. *Muduraik-Kāñji*
7. *Neḍunalvāḍai.*

III
8. *Mullaip-pāṭṭu.*
9. *Sirupān-arrup-paḍai.*

IV
10. *Murug-ārrup-paḍai.*

In these groups, Nakkīrar, the author of *Neḍunalvāḍai,* falls in the second. He refers in *Aham* 141 to Karikāl-vaḷavan, the hero of *Perumpāṇ-ārrup-padai* of the first group . There is no

evidence to show that these two were contemporaries. Hence Nakkīrar lived later than Karikāl-vaḷavan. It also follows that Neduñjeḻiyan, the hero of Nakkīrar's poem *Neḍunal-vāḍai* was later than Karikal-vaḷavan. This is confirmed by the fact that none of the poets who have praised Karikāla have composed any poem on Neduñjeḻıyan.

I have reserved my comment on the author of *Murug-āṟṟup-paḍai* to the last. He bears the name of Nakkīrar. But there are very strong grounds for holding that he was different from and lived far later than any of the poets so far mentioned. The literary usages like '*muḍimār*' in line 89, '*perīyar*' in line 168 and '*nalkuṃadi*' in line 295 totally differ from what we find in the earlier Nakkīrar's poems or in the early Sangam literature and we can hardly identify the two Late words like '*ankuśam*,' '*kodanḍam*', late formations like '*āgiya*', wholesale adoption of lines from earlier works (*Murug-āṟṟup-paḍai:* line 24=Naṟṟinai: line 62), and late Puranic stories–all these support this view and this matter has been fully discussed in the introduction to my edition of *Murug-āṟṟup-paḍai.* From the account of the *Pattup-pāṭṭu* manuscripts given by Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer in his edition of the work we can gather that in most of the manuscripts *Murug-āṟṟuppaḍai* does not find a place. This poem must be classed along with *Kalittogai* and *Paripāḍal* and hence included under the later Sangam literature.

No doubt the term later Sangam literature is a misnomer; we call these works by this name only by courtesy. They do not have any connection with the reputed Sangam under whose auspices the other anthologies have been collected. *Nakkīrar,* the author of *Murug-āṟṟup-paḍai* may not be identical with Nakkīrar, the commentator of *Iṟayanār-ahaporul.*

The still earlier Nakkīrar, the author of *Neḍunalvāḍai* has given us some clue as regards the probable date of his compositions. He refers to *rāśis* (Zodiacal constellations), but also distinctly says that the Sun beginning from *Mesha* (Aries) travels through the successive *rāśis, i.e.,* through each successive sign of the zodiac. The passage occurs in *Neḍunalvāḍai* in line 160 to 162. A contemporary poet Kūdalūr-kiḻar mentions, in *Purām* 229, *mēsha rāśi* with several other details, such as the

fact that the *nakshtra* ' *Pūrva phālgunī* ' was on a particular day declining from the zenith at midnight. From the history of Hindu astronomy we might gather that the rāsis came into practical use only about 300 A.D. Mr. L.D. Swamikannu Pillai has examined the whole question in his Indian Ephemeris[1] and comes to the conclusion that the ' early Indian literature (Sanskrit or Dravidian) before A.D. 300 does not refer to the signs of the Zodiac, to the movements of the planet or to planetary horoscopes, which are, as it were, the tripod of Astrology '. But on such questions the dating can only be approximate. Nakkīrar and his contemporaries (poets and kings) may be assigned to about 250 A.D. This is confirmed by several facts emerging from a study of contemporary poems. Nakkīrar himself, in the same *Neḍunalvāḍai* gives details of an auspicious hour for laying the foundation of a palace, describing a sort of sun-dial. Architectural details, such as *garbha-griha* are also mentioned by him. Two contemporary poets Nappūdanār and Madurai Āsiriar Nallantuvanār (to be distinguished from Āsiriar Nallanduvanār of *Paripāḍal* and *Kalittogai)* make reference to water-clock under the name 'Kannal',[2] which was probably a Roman import. ' Kannal ' whose origin and derivation can hardly be made out now is perhaps connected with the Greek Khronos. The mention of a Ganga king in *Aham* 44 points also to the same date. So we may take it that the last of the Sangam poets, *i.e.*, the poets of Nakkīrar epoch flourished about the end of the third century A.D.

Now, Mānguḍi-marudan refers in his *Mathuraik-kāñji* to Vaḍimbalambaninṟa-Pāṇḍya. (lines 60-61) and Palyāgaśālai-muḍukuḍumi-Peruvaḻudi (line 759) as two of the remote ancestors of Nedunjeḻiyan, the victor of Talai-yālangānam. Vaḍimbalamba-ninṟa-Pāṇḍyan is some-what of a hazy figure and to him is attributed the first festival for the Sea-god and the digging of the Pahruḷiyāṟu. But Mudukuḍumi is a historical personage and he is praised in as many as 5 stanzas in *Puṟam*. A few generations might have elapsed between his time and that of the Nedunjeḻiyan and it is within reason to count the number as five or six. This leads us to the conclusion that the earliest of the Pāṇḍyas known to us definitely lived about the

[1] Vol. I, part I, p. 496.

[2] Mullaip-pāttu line 57, Aham 43.

second century A.D. and that will also be the time when the earliest poets who have sung about this Pāṇḍya lived. The Vēḷvikudi grant also supports this conclusion by mentioning that Mudukuḍumi's grant was long enjoyed before the Kalabhras came (nīḍubukti-tuiyttapin). After the Kalabhra interregnum, Kaḍungōn of the Pandya line succeeds to the kingdom. Kaḍungōn's rule began about 600 A.D. Allowing 500 years for the long interval and the Kalabhra interregnum, we reach the beginning of the 2nd century A.D. when Mudukuḍumi may have flourished.

We shall take Padirru-p-pattu next. This consists of ten sections and we have lost the first and the last sections of this work. It deals with the Chēra dynasty. The first section was probably about Perunjōrru-Udiyan-Cēral and the last section, about Yānaikkaṭchey Māndaram-Cēral-Irumporai, the Elephant-eyed Chēra. A detailed study of the work yields us two genealogies. The first genealogy gives us three generations of one Royal house and the second also covers three generations.

Senguṭṭuvan, the hero of the fifth decade is the most famous of these Chēras. He was a contemporary of Gajabāhu I of Ceylon (See ante) and he ascended the throne probably about 200 A.D. We may count back at least two generations from him. This also gives us the first half of the second century A.D. as the date when the first tangible figure of a Chēra king emerges into history.

The poets who composed the sections of Padirru-p-pattu are Kumattūr-kannanār, Pālai-kautamanār, Kāppiyārru-kāppiyanār, Paranar, Kākkiapāḍiniyār-Neccheḷḷaiyār, Kapilar, Arisil-kiḻār and Perungunrūr Kiḻār. Among these we find Paranar, and Kapilar. The former was the contemporary of Senguttuvan and the latter, the contemporary of Selvak-kaḍungō-vāli-Ādan, who lived sometime later. Probably these poets lived between 150 and 250 A.D.

Ain-guru-nūru, was compiled by Pulatturai murriya-kūdalūr-kilār under the royal patronage of the elephant-eyed Chēra mentioned above. This Chera was taken in captivity by the Pāndya king Nedunjeḻiyan of Talaiyālangānam fame, and his death is bemoaned by the above poet in *Puram* 229. So the poets who composed the five centums of Aingurunūru must have all lived round about 275 A.D. The poets are Ōram-bōgiar, Ammūvanār, Kapilar, Ōdal-Āndaiyār and Pēyanār. Kapilar being one of them, these poets might be placed between A.D. 200-275.

Thus we are led to conclude that the poets of the early Sangam literature flourished from the second century A.D. to the end of the third century A.D. and that this was the genuine Sangam period.

Poets of the Sangam Period

How many poets were there during the Sangam period?

The total number of poets who composed these poems can only be approximately given. The tradition embodied in the commentary of Iṟaiyanār Ahapporul mentions the total as 449. But the Sanga Iḷlakkiyam (Samājam edition, 1940) counts as many as 473. Naturally this aggregate excludes the anonymous authors of the 88 poems (3 in Aham, 10 in Kurundogai, 56 in Narrinai, 5 in Padirruppattu and 14 in Purananuru) and includes the 35 poets who are named after some significant expression occurring in their poems. In the present state of our knowledge, even the Samajam total has to be taken as merely an approximation. Curiously enough, this number comes near the traditional number which might after all be correct. Most probably the scholar who recorded the tradition computed the total from the manuscripts of Sangam works available in his days. We have suspected that the *Paripāḍal* the invocatory stanzas at the beginning of most of the Sangam collections, the Kalittogai and the Murugarruppadai, do not belong to the early Sangam period. The last two works may be left out of account, since they are wrongly attributed to poet of the early Sangam. So if we omit from the Sangam numbering the 14 poets, 13 of the Paripadal and Perundēvanār of Bhāratam fame, the author of the invocatory stanzas, the total comes to 459. This is still nearer the traditional number and lends weight to my view that Paripadal etc. belong to a later date.

It has been noted above that 35 poets are named after some significant expressions used by them. For instance, a poet bears the name Kangul veḷḷattār (lit. he of the night-flood) and the expression kangul-veḷḷam is found in his poem. This device of naming poets occurs in Sanskrit anthologies also.[1].

Pāri-magaḷir (Pari's daughters) are mentioned as the authors of stanza 112 of *Puṟam.* A parallel instance is found in sloka

[1] Sloka 1255 of *Subhishitavali* is ascribed to a poet of the name 'Dagdhamarana' and this phrase occurs in the sloka itself. Other instances are 'Nidrādaridra' (sloka 1362), Karnikāramankha (sloka 1660), etc.

2227 of Subhāshitāvali which ascribed to Kaviputrau (lit. the two sons of a poet.). There are also other common features worth studying.

Returning to our subject, it may be possible by a close and diligent study of the poems to place these 449 poets in their chronological order. There are internal evidences and also the names of kings and patrons on whom most of the *Puṟanāṉūṟu* poems and some of the other anthologies have been composed. Padirrupattu devotes itself entirely to Chēra Kings. All these may be of great help in constructing this chronology. An attempt has been made in this direction by Mr. K.N. Sivarāja Pillai formerly of the Madras University.

A fresh independent enquiry is necessary to settle this matter finally. Here a general idea of the Tamil language and its vocabulary at this period might be given. We have mentioned already the several contacts which threw open the Tamil countries to the cultural influences of the north in an ever-increasing measure. A detailed description of a yāga performance in Puram 166 and frequent references to Vedic gods in Puram *(e.g. 16, 23)*, Padirruppattu *(e.g. 11)* and other early collections furnish evidence of the spread of the Vedic religion among the Tamils. Buddhists[1] were also propagating their religion in the Tamil countries, among others, and tried to give a new lease of life to Buddhism in the South, where it was originally preached by the missionaries sent by Emperor Asoka. Some poets bear Buddhist names *e.g.*, Ilambōdhiyār, Theradaran, Siru-veṇ-thēraiyār, etc. Jainism supplied a new religious force which was for some centuries a powerful rival to Hinduism in the South. Jaina mythology is found in Puram 175 and in Aham

[1] South India as a centre of Pali Buddhism by B.C. Law (Dr. S.K. Aiyangar's Commemoration volume pp. 239-245): Nāgārjuna Konda inscriptions prove that there was a mahavihāra for Buddhist recluses coming from different countries among which Damila is mentioned. These Buddhists were Thēravādins. Gandhavamsa says (J.P.T.S., 1886 pp: 66-67) that Kānchipura was one of the main centres of Pali Buddhism of Thēravada. Mudurai also (Madhurasutta paṭṭana) is mentioned as the place where Buddhaghōsa and Buddhamitta lived for sometime before the former repaired to Kanchipura. Buddhagōsa was a native of Tirunelvēli region. Uraga-pura (modern Uraiyur in the Tiruchirāpalli District) was the birthplace of Buddhadatta who lived in the village of Bhūtamangala near 'the flourishing inland port of Kavēripattana.' Buddhaghōsa and Buddhadatta were contemporaries and they flourished in the 5th century A.D. South India continued to be the centre of Pali Buddhism as late as the 12th century A.D., a date to which Anuruddha (a Buddhist teacher of South India, according to the Talaing records) the celebrated author of the Abhidhammttha is assigned.

59. Thus the Tamil land bacame a fertile nursery and the several religions noted above throve in friendly rivalry.

The adherents of these several religions brought in their special vocabulary and enriched the Tamil language. New tributaries were added to its stream and it swelled in content. The orthodox Hindus of the age, mainly Brāhmins were responsible for words[1] relating to their gods, religion, religious rites, religious beliefs, religious books, ethics and to their daily habits and customs. In addition to these, several common words[2] relating to the ordinary social life of a people were also contributed by them. These two classes of words taken directly from Sanskrit flowed into the main current of the language and enriched its contents. Next to Brāhmins, the Jains seem to have contributed most to our language. Their words also fall into the classes mentioned above, but with a notable difference. The words all of Prakrit forms were mostly in current colloquial use.[3]

The religious terms of the Jains did not pass into the main current, though they were used in late specialistic works such as Jivakachintāmani, Sūḷāmani, etc. The Buddhists also contributed to our language and their words were mainly of Pāli origin. It might be that several of these were of Prākrit descent also.[4]

Judging from the vocabulary contributed by these several

[1] *(e.g.)* Yūpam–puram 15, alliyam (Hallisa)–puram 33; avi (havis) puram 377; āvuti (āhuti)–puram 99; vacciram (vajrāyudha)–puram 241; Kandam (skandha)–puram 52; Kanda (skandha)– puram 57, 93; Kavuriyar (Kauravar)–puram 3; darumam (dharma)– puram 353; Tuvarai (Dvaraka)–puram 201; tūn (Sthūna)–puram 86; amarar–puram 99; vēdam–puram 6; pindam-puram 234; (māya)-puram 57; muttī (lit. Three fires)-puram 2; munivar-puram 6, 43; bali–aham 166; tittiyam (chitya)–aham 361; tulāi (tulasi)–padirru. 31;pūdam (bhūta)–puram 369; Catai (jatā)–puram 1; karakam–puram 1; tavam (tapas)–puram 1.

[2] *(e.g.)* nir–puram 1; Kalam (Khala), padam (pada), tumbai (tumba),imayan–puram 2; nēmi, mukam–puram 3; Kān (kanana)–puram 5; kamari, ulakam–puram 6; cāpam (cāpa), mā, valavan (vallabha)–puram 7; pōkam (bhoga), mandilam (mandala)–puram 8; Dandam (danda), amiltu (amirta), mallar (malla), silai (sila)–puram 10; mayil (mayura)-puram 116; pātinini)–puram 11.

[3] *(e.g.)* vannam, uru (rupa), Kanan (gaṇa), ēmam (Kshēma)–puram 1; vali (bala), pāl (payas), andi (sandhi)–puram 2; murasam murasam (muraja), nēem (snēha), sāndu (candana), ilakkam (lakshya)–puram 3; namam (saman), tēem (desa), nagar (nagara)–puram 6; iravu (rātri). mīn (mīna), payam (prayōjana)–puram 3; ūkkam (utsāha), tānai (sēna) malai (malaya)–puram 8; pārppanar (brāhmana), aran (charana)–puram 9; pāci (prāci), ūci (udīci)–puram 229.

[4] *(e.g.)* attam (addha=road)–Kuram 307; ahil (agalu=aloc wood)–kurun 339; ānai (ānā=order)–maduraik. 761; annai (annā=mother)–kuran 93; pandam (bhāndam=article, goods)–puram 102; cāti (cāti=jar)–perumpān 280; tōni (dōni=through-shaped canoe with an outrigger to steady it)-puram 229; seutu (jeoto=gambling); kamuhu (kamuko=

religionists, we might conclude that Brāminism powerfully held the imagination of the people and was predominant in every walk of life. Next to this came Jainism and not far behind. The leaders of this religion mixed freely with the people, studied their language and became adepts in it. They laid great emphasis on moral principles, persuaded the people to become converts to their religion and were accommodative enough in several respects. The Buddhists led, in later times, perhaps a secluded life in caves and did not move freely with the people. Hence their religion never had any great influence in the Tamilian country. Probably this accounts for their comparative insignificance in South India.

Against this background lay scattered the several poetic pieces of the earliest times. They were secular, a good part of them praising kings and chieftains and subtly introducing religious elements to attract and influence the nobility of the land; and the rest, dealing with love in all its aspects, to appeal to the literate among the masses.

Leaving out of account the poems of the two anthologies, the Murugarruppadai, the invocatory stanzas and the padigams in *Padirruppattu* which are all of a later date, the earliest literature, including fragments, consists of 2,186 poems distributed over six anthologies and one collection of longer poems. They contain in all about 26,350 lines. They are all in *Ahaval* metre, the first in the long course of development of the Tamil metrical system. It is indigenous and has no parallel in Sanskrit, the

areca palm)–perum-pān 7; kannan (kanko=krishna); kanji (kanjikam=a sour rice-gruel); kaitai (kētaki=the tree **Pandanus Odorattissimus**)-kurun 304; kūtam (kūto= a sledge-hammer)–perumpān 438; pōtu (potu=ordinary, common)–purām 8; manāivi (manaivi=woman)-puram 250; nānjil (nāgalam=plouth)-puram 19; niyamam (nigame=a market town)-madurai-k 365; Ōram (ōrō=below. posterior, on this side); pakkam (pakkho=a wing, side etc.)-kuram. 129; uvamam (opamam=smile, a comparison)-maduraik. 516; panniyam (panyam=ware, commodity)-maduraik. 506; palingu (phaliko=crystal, quartz)-kurinci 57; pāhal (phāggavo=a sort of pot-herd)-puram 16; panju (picu=cotton)-puram 116; pillai (pillako=child)–puram 380; pulu (pulavo=warm maggot); sānam, sānai (sano=a grind-stone); seliyo=a man of self-discipline)-puram 19; seyya (seyyo=better, excellent); tagaram (tagaram=the shrub ***tabernae montana coronaria*** and a fragrant powder obtained from it)-puram 132; kurinci 108; tāl (tālo=key)-nedunal 63; thālam=metal bowl, plate-puram 120; tūmbu=a sort of water vessel with a spout)-puram 19; tūnam (thūna=pillar, column)-perumpān 316; tunnam (tunnam=suture, patch)-puram 136; valangu-(valasiga=valanjetito use, resort to spend)-puram 252; varaku (varuku=the bean ***Phaseolus tribolus***)-purma 34.

– *Childrers: Pali Dictionary*

blank verse in English being its nearest equivalent. The magnificent sweep of the longer poems in *Pattu-paṭṭu* is sometimes marred by obscurity of construction. In fact, the commentator, a scholiast of a very high order, often takes to devious ways in his explanation of several passages. But in shorter poems, the language is simple, direct and forceful. Conciseness of expression, pregnancy of meaning, purity of diction and unity of thought are the main characteristics of these Sangam poems and the simplicity of the Tamilian taste compares very favourably with that of the ancient Greeks. The frigid conceits, and the pedantic professional exercises of grammarians which characterise the literature of a later period are entirely absent. On the other hand, simple humanity is mirrored in these crystal-clear utterances. Where emotions are stirred, they are severely restrained and the subdued expression which they give rise to are the most effective in literature. There is art, severe and simple; but of artificiality there is very little trace.

Love Poems of the Ancient Tamils

Claims are sometimes made that the *Aham* poems, that is poems on love are the sole monopoly of the ancient Tamils. Sanskrit literature abounds with poems of this nature and indeed, some of these poems are very ancient. I may refer to the famous Hāla Sattasāī. It is a collection of 700 erotic *gāthās* in the Ārya metre in *Mahārāshtri Prakrit* and it is ascribed to king Hāla (c.A.D. 20-24). The situations portrayed in these *gāthās* are, like the Tamil *Tuṟai* given in the colophons. But love-poems are not confined to any one clime or country. It is said that during the time of Justinian, 'epigrammatic' writing, especially in its amatory department, experienced a great revival at the hands of Agathias, the historian, Paulus Silentiarius and their circle and that their ingenious, but mannered productions were collected by Agathias into a new anthology. The poems in our collections also do not escape the charge of being mannered production. But the ancient Tamil poets can take credit for some of the loveliest utterances on erotic themes.

The value of these ancient anthologies, especially of *Puṟanānanūṟu* and *Padiṟṟup-pattu* can hardly be exaggerated They portray the life of the times. They give us glimpses of

political and social conditions. They describe with exactitude, the religion, manners, customs, beliefs and superstitions. They disclose a vivid picture of the esteem in which learning, literature, and art were held by our ancients. They teach us a noble philosophy of life and conduct. They whisper to us sweetly and intimately about the domestic felicity of the ancient times. In short, they constitute a store-house of facts bearing on ancient manners, customs and ideas and they are one of the influences which have contributed to mould the literature of the later Tamils. To-day they serve as beacon lights to guide modern poesy in the Tamil land. Above all, there is genuine poetry of a very high order which inspite of the inevitable changes in our outlook and in our life thrills our very being and makes us look back with pride and joy at the poetic achievements of the ancient Tamils.

PART II

PART II

HISTORY OF TAMIL LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

(A.D. 300–1000)

CHAPTER 1

ANTHOLOGIES

The beginning of the fourth century A.D. marks a new epoch in the history of Tamil language and literature even as it does in the political and social history of the Tamil land. A new impulse surged through the Tamil land and its kings and chieftains felt it their duty to collect the ancient poems and arrange them in handy and systematic anthologies. They employed famous poets to do this work. The best poems were chosen, classified according to their subject-matter and then again arranged according to their length. Thus taking *Ahattiṇai,* 400 poems with 4 to 8 lines each were collected into one anthology known as *Kuṟundogai* (short collection); another series of 400 poems, 9 to 12 lines each, was made into *Naṟṟiṇai;* a third group of 400 poems ranging from 13 to 31 lines each became *Ahanānūṟu.* Besides these individual stanzas, there existed five centums of stanzas each on one *tiṇai* by one poet, and they formed together the *Aiṅguṟunūṟu.* Taking *Puṟattiṇai,* 400 stanzas went into the collection *Puṟa-nānūṟu.* Besides, there were the ten decads of the *Padiṟṟuppattu* of which a detailed account has been given in Part I. We may presume that while in some cases the requisite number of poems were chosen from a wide range of competing poems, in others a shortage had to be made good by the composition of new poems. The *Naṟṟiṇai* compiled under the orders of Pāṇḍya Pannāḍu-tanda Māṟan Vaḷuḍi includes two stanzas by him (97 and 301); a verse of his occurs also in the Kuṟundogai (270). Similarly Ukkiṟapperuvaḷudi[1] who patronized the collection of the *Ahanānūṟu* contributes stanza (26) to it, and another to the *Naṟṟinai* (98). There are parallel instances in the history of Greek anthologies.

We have no similar evidence relating to the *Puṟanānūṟu* of which the colophon at the end is altogether missing, besides

1 Not the same as the homonymous king who took the fortress of Kaṅapper, *pace* Dr. V. Swaminatha Aiyar and Pinnattur A. Narayanaswamy Aiyar.

two complete poems and the names of the authors of 14 others. The principle followed in the arrangement of the poems is also not clear. Generally speaking the grammatical categories of *Puṟattiṇai* were followed in the main, attention being given also to the kings of the Chēra, Pāṇḍya and Chōla dynasties in order, and to minor chieftains, *vaḷḷals* (patrons) and others with little regard to chronology. Some atleast of the poets represented in the collection wrote after the grammatical categories of *tinai, tuṟai* were fairly settled[1]; some verses may have been culled from works not now traceable while some situations explained in the colophons to the poems are obviously fictitious or imaginary.

The four collections named above under *Ahattiṇai* are also based on established grammatical categories. Even the *Kuṟundogai* (collection of Short poems) knows of *Uyartiṇai* (224), *neydar-parappu* (114) and *maḍalūrdal* (17) a purely literary convention. So the collections were all made after the first grammatical treatises, were written or at least after grammatical speculations had crystallized into conventional terms. *Tolkāppiyam* frequently adopts the views of earlier authors, some of whom may have lived before some of the poets represented in the collection, and long before the time of the compilers of the collections themselves.

A few facts relating to the eight collections, not so far mentioned may now be detailed. The *Aingurunūṟu* (five short hundreds) perhaps the earliest of the anthologies (end of third century A.D.) contains stanzas of three lines and was put together by Pulattuṟai-muṟṟiya Kūdalur-Kiḻār under the patronage of the ' Elephant-eyed Chera '. The poet Ōrambōgi composed the centum on *marudam,* Ammūvanār on *neydal,* Kapilar on *Kuṟiñji,* Ōdal-Āndai on *pālai* and Peyan on *mullai.* The *Kuṟundogai,* compiled by Pūrikkō, includes poems by 205 poets. This was also among the first collections to be made, the *Naṟṟiṇai* following it soon after. The *Puṟanānūṟu* contains a lament on the death of the ' Chera of the Elephant-eye '. If this Chera was the hero of the last decad in the ' Ten Tens ' *(Padiṟṟuppattu),* then that anthology may also have preceded the *Puṟanānūṟu.* The *padigams* (Skt. *pratika),* to each decad,

[1] *Karandai (340), tumbai (283), uḷiñai (50), Kānji (296, 365) Vanji (378, 394), neydal (194, 398)*

not found in manuscripts containing only the text, were obviously later additions. There exist old commentaries on *Aingurunūru* and *Padirruppattu.* Only 22 out of the 70 songs of the *Paripāḍal* have survived. An old verse says that it contained 8 poems on Vishnu, 31 on Muruga, 1 on Kadu-kiḻāl (kali) or *Kaḍal* (sea according to another reading), 26 on the river Vaigai, and 4 on the city of Madurai. Each poem has a colophon giving the name of the author, of the musician who set it to music, and of the melody to which it is set. The author and patron of the collection are alike unknown. Fragments of a learned commentary attributed to the celebrated Parimēl-aḻagar have survived. The *Kalittogai,* in the kali metre, contains 150 stanzas distributed unevenly among the five *tiṇais–pālai* 35, *Kuriñji* 29, *marudam* 35, *mullai* 17, and *neydal* 33. Nachchinārkkiniyar, the commentator, makes it clear that Nallanduvanār compiled this anthology; it is seen from the comment on *neydal* 25 that the compiler was also the author of the section; but whether he was also the author of the other sections we have no means of determining. A stanza of doubtful authenticity ascribes the five sections to five different authors, though apart from it there is nothing in the style of the poems to preclude all of them being ascribed to Nallanduvanār.

The *Ahanānūru* has 400 stanzas (excluding the invocatory verse) composed by 145 poets. The poems are numbered schematically; those bearing odd numbers belong to *pālai,* those bearing 10 and its multiples are *neydal;* those having 4 like 4, 14, 24 are *mullai;* those having numbers 2 and 8 (2, 8, 12, 18) are *Kuriñji;* those with the number 6 (6, 16, 26, etc.) relate to *marudam.* The schemes unknown to the *Narriṇai* and the *Kurundogai,* makes this a later collection. Its alternative name *Neḍundogai* (the long collection) modelled on the name of *Kurundogai* confirms this conclusion. Uruttirasanmar (Rudrasarma), son of Madurai Uppurikuḍi-kiḻār was the compiler and Pāṇḍya Ukkira-peruvaḻudi, the patron. To the royal patron are attributed stanza 26 of this collection and 98 of the *Narriṇai.* The names of the poet and the patron figure prominently in the legend of the Three Sangams narrated in the opening paragraphs of the Commentary on *Iraiyanār-Ahapporuḷ.* There is an old commentary valuable but meagre, on the first 90 stanzas of the *Ahanānūru.*

The *Puṟanānūṟu* is historically the most valuable and perhaps the latest of the collections. Poems numbered 267 and 268 are missing. There is an old commentary up to poem 266. The text of the subsequent poems is not therefore as well established as that of the earlier poems in the collection. Of the extant poems 14 are anonymous; for 118 only the poet's names are available without any indication of the occasion for the song. The poets represented number 157, and the kings, chieftains and others 128. The first 85 poems are devoted to the three crowned kings of the Tamil land, though unevenly distributed among them; 86 is by *Kāvaṟpeṇḍu* (foster-mother) on the heroism of her foster-son. Then the *vaḷḷals* (patrons or benefactors) are taken up in order. Adigamān Nedumān Añji and his son (87-104); Veḷ Pāri (105-120); Kāri (121-126); Áy Andiran (127-36) Nānjil Vaḷḷuvan (137-40); Pēhan (141-47); Naḷḷi (148-51); Ōri (152-53); Koṇgānan-Kiḻān (154-56); Eṛaikkōn (157); and Kumaṇan (156-65). The first poem on Kumaṇan mentions all the 'seven Vaḷḷals' best known for their liberality. Then follow (166-81) twelve minor chieftains, each getting one poem, except Piṭṭankoṟṟan who takes five poems (168-72). This group includes (176) Nalliyakkōḍan, the hero of *Sirupāṇ-aṟṟuppaḍai* in the Ten Idylls. In poems 182-95 some general truths and principles of conduct are expatiated upon by kings and poets of distinction. Poems 196-242 are on various aspects of the relations between poet and patron. Then occurs a series of poems in which a note of sadness is predominant. A poet regrets the irrecoverable loss of care-free youthfulness (243), a king grieves over the death of his beloved queen (245) no. 244 being a fragment of only two lines) and a devoted queen performs *sati* (246-47). Poems 248-56 are on the state of widow-hood and its hardships. Till this point the compilation includes poems on themes of what are technically known as *puṟappuṟam* and *ahappuṟam* and poems bearing on war are few. Hanceforth poems on war, *puṟam* proper begin. Similar in some respects to the *Shadgunya* of the *Arthasāstrās* are the seven tiṇais of *puṟam, viz., vetchi* dealing with cattle-lifting, *karandai* with the recovery of cattle–both the themes familiar to the *Mahābhārata, vanji* with invasion of foreign territory by a conqueror, *kañji* with resistance to the invader, *Uḷiñai* and *nochchi* with the siege of a fortress and its defence respectively and finally *tumbai* and *vāhai* dealing respectively with open battle and victory. These technical terms are taken from the

names of flowers, and the hero and his army are supposed to wear on their heads the flowers specified for the occasion. One hundred and two poems treat of topics of these *tiṇais* (257-358). From 359 to the end the poems once again relate to *tiṇais* under puṟappuṟam and repeat names of some kings and poets that have occurred earlier in the collection. It is probable, that though the names of poems and kings and the circumstances of the composition of the poems might be fairly early in date, the *tiṇais* and their sub-divisions *tuṟais* were added by the commentator about the twelfth or thirteenth century A.D. on the basis of the*Puṟapporuḷ- veṇbā-mālai,* a work of the eleventh century[1].

The facts mentioned so far and a few other considerations suggest the following as the most probable chronological order of the collections, *viz.*, (1) *Ainguṟunuṟu,* (2) *Kuṟundogai,* (3) *Naṟṟiṇai,* (4) *Padiṟṟuppattu,* (5) *Ahanāṉūṟu* and (6) *Puṟanāṉūṟu*. *Ainguṟunūṟu* contains stanzas of three lines. The poet Kākkaipāḍiniyār which name must have had its origin from a stanza of *Kuṟundogai* (210) is the author of the sixth decad of *Padiṟṟu-p-pattu*. This shows that the former was the earlier of the two collections. The second, third and fifth were compiled at Madurai as seen from their colophons; the first most probably at Tondi, the capital of the 'Chera of the Elephant-eye'; the *Padiṟṟupattu* being entirely on the Cheras must also have been collected at their capital[2]. On the *Puṟanāṉṟūu* we have no decisive evidence, but from the facts that the poem immediately after the invocation is on a Chera, and that the Chera occupies the first place among the three kings in the earlier poems, we may infer that it was also compiled at the Chera capital. The first collection goes back to the end of the third century A.D.; the others may belong to the fourth.

The two remaining collections out of the eight, *Paripāḍal* and *Kalittogai,* briefly noticed already, clearly belong to a later age. None of the poets of the *Paripāḍal* figures among the authors

[1] cf. Nachchinārikkiniyar on Tol. III. 90.

[2] It is significant that neither Ainguruņuru nor Padirruppattu knows anything of Vanji or Karuvur. The padigam alone of the latter work (IX decad) mentions Vanji.

in the six anthologies above named.[1] The nature and number of Sanskrit words and expressions in the *Paripāḍal* bespeak its late origin,[2] and late forms of even Tamil words abound,[3] as also late terminations and late Puranic tales like the Ahalya episode, Prahalada's story, Samudramathana, and so on. Social institutions and manners of a late date are also there *e.g.*, *mạnmagaḷir* (7), expert danseuses: *ambāvāḍal* (11) ceremonial bathing of maidens with their companions in the month of Tai (Jan. - Feb.). Women's ornaments, decorations and cosmetics seem to be more varied than in the earlier anthologies. Lastly, the astronomical data in the eleventh song point to a date about the middle of the seventh century A.D.,[4] and the compilation of the anthology was perhaps later. *Kalittogai* is also in a similar case. Late terminations like *Kal* in *allākkāl* (124) and *ēl* as in *Kāttāyēl (144)* besides late formations like *ānāl* (139) may be noted. Earlier poems are drawn upon as for instance *Kuṟundogai* 18 in *Kali 137; Tirukkuṟaḷ* in 139, 142-5. An incident from the *Uttara-Rāmāyana* is elaborately described in *Kali* 38, and the story of Udayana pacifying the elephant Nalagiri with the music of his *vīna* Ghoshāvati (Kali 2) also point to a late date. These two collections which were probably made about the eighth century must be put together in a separate class. We are justified in styling them later Sangam works.

The invocation in the *Padiṟṟuppattu* is missing; in the other five early collections it is by ' Perundēvạnār who sang the Bharatam '. The identity of this author is not easy to make out. Some hold him to be the author of *Bhārata-veṇbā* of the time of the Pallava King Nandi-Varman III. If these were correct, even the early collections will have to be assigned to the ninth century A.D.[5] But in the larger Sinnamanūr plates

[1] Nallanduvanār of *Aham* 43 is called Madurai Āsiriyar. Aham 59 mentions a poet Anduvan. These two are different from the poet of the *Paripādal* who is called only Asiriyar Nallanduvanār. Likewise the author of *Puram* 182 Ilamperuvaḷudi who died in the sea (kadal-ul-māynda) was different from the author of Paripādal 15 on Tirumāl (Vishnu). The former was a Jain as his reference to Indirar in the plural and the highly ethical tone of his poem go to show.

[2] E. G. Kavitai (6), amirtapanam (8), mithunam and mallikamali (11).

[3] Aamam (6), nan (6)

[4] L.D. Swamikannu Pillai gives A.D. 634, Indian Ephemeries i.i. pp. 98-109.

[5] (Kadugu) Perundevanar, author of *Narrinai 83, Kurundogai 255,* and Aham 51 was obviously a different poet, and does not concern us here.

(tenth century A.D.) there is a pointed reference to a translation of the Bhāratam into Tamil which stands in close relation to the establishment of the Tamil Sangam at Madurai. These facts together with the extant colophons to the earlier collections point clearly to the fourth century A.D. as the latest date of their compilation. The invocatory stanzas must have been additions of a far later date.

Of the *Pattuppāṭṭu,* we may well doubt if it ranked as an anthology in early times. The commentary on the *Iṟaiyanār Ahapporuḷ* does not mention it. There is no colophon indicating that the poems formed an anthology. Ilampūranar, the earliest extant commentator on *Tolkāppiyam* mentions the individual poems by name, and gives no indication that he knew of them as a collection. But Nachchinārkkiniyar in his commentary on *Malaipaḍukadām* clearly refers to the anthology. Mylainathar also mentions *Pattuppāṭṭu* in his commentary on Nannul. Apparently the 'Ten Idylls' *Pattuppāṭṭu* came into existence as such between the time of Ilampūranar and that of Nachchinārkkiniyar, say about the eleventh century. The *Tirumurg-āṟṟuppaḍai* which is placed first in the collection was doubtless a late addition. Tolkappiar (c. A.D. 500) in his definition of *āṟṟuppaḍai* does not contemplate poems like this The poem finds a place in the eleventh book of the Saiva *tirumuṟai* (canon). Its composition may be placed about A.D. 700, and its inclusion as one of the 'ten idylls' must have taken place considerably later.

Vajranandi's Sangam

In A.D. 470, an event of first rate importance occurred in the History of Tamil language and literature. This was the establishment of a Dramila Sangha[1] at Madurai under the guidance of Vajranandi. Among the earliest poets, we have such Jain names as Ulōcchanār, Mātirtan, etc. We get glimpses also of Jain cosmology and mythology as in Puram 175 and

[1] See E.P. Rice: History of Kanarese Literature. P. 24. Also J.B.B.R.A.S. XVII. i, p. 74: Siripuñjjapādaśisó dāvidasanghassa Kārajōvutthō Nāmēṇa Vajjanamdi pāhudavēdi mahāsattō. Pañcasayē chavīse Vikkamarāyassa maranapattassa Dakkhina mahurājādō Dāvidasanghō mahāmōhō. Dr. C. Minakshi's Administration and Social life under the Pallavas' 2nd Edition 1977. p. 253.

Aham 59. Their austerities we find in *Aham* 193. But we do not hear of any earlier Jaina organisation for the advancement of Tamil language and literature. Of the epigraphs, relating to the early Pandyas, only the smaller Sinnamanūr plates (10th cent. A.D.) mention the Sangam or Academy at Madurai as having been founded by one of the ancient Pandyas who succeeded Nedunjeḷiyan, the victor of Talaiyālangānam. This might very well be a reference to Vajranandi's Sangam. The earlier epigraphs (Veḷvikudi grant and Srivaramangalam plates: 770 A.D.) do not refer to any Sangam. The earliest strata of Tamil literature now available are also silent about the Sangam, though they connect Madurai and Tamil learning in a special manner *e.g.,* Puram 58). This is because the Pandyas ruling at Madurai considered it a special honour to be patrons of Tamil learning. From the above a legitimate conclusion follows that the tradition about the three Sangams is of late origin, perhaps even later than the date of the smaller Sinnamanūr plates which mention only one Sangam. It may be noted that the tradition as embodied in the commentary on Iṟaiyanār Kaḷaviyal mentions Kaḍungōn as the Pandya king who placed the last members of the 'First Sangam' on the panel, as it were. Kaḍungōn figures in the Veḷvikudi grant and from the Pandya genealogy occurring in the reign, he may be assigned to the end of the 6th cent. (K.A.N. Sāstri's 'The Pandyan Kingdom,' p. 41) perhaps the Sangam originated by Vajranandi lasted about 25 years. The term Sangam by which the three academies at Madurai have always been called is of Jain origin and this also lends support to the view that the academy first owed its existence to this enterprising community of scholars.[1]

So far as the Tamil region is concerned, we may say that the Jains were the real apostles of culture and learning. No doubt the Brahmins also who settled in the South have got equal claim; but their cultural influence stopped with the nobles and the gentry of the land and did not at first try to reach the masses beyond. The Jains, on the other hand, began cultural contact with the people and it was only later that they tried

[1] The Jains, more than any other sect have in their writings and especially in their exceptionally comprehensive narrative literature, never addressed themselves exclusively to the learned classes, but make an appeal to other strata of the people also. As is still the case at this present day, it was among the merchant classes in particular that they found their most loyal lay adherents- Winternitz, H.I.L. Vol. II, p. 475.

to bring under their influence the nobles and kings. Their sacred language also helped this upward movement of culture. It was Prākrit, probably Addhama-gadhi, which was easy to learn and to speak and which had several points in common with Tamil. The tendency to reduce all declensions to one type, absence of dual number, assimilation taking the place of conjunct consonants, disappearance of some sounds, existence of the short vowels ē and ō and the avoidance of final consonants are some of the points of agreement. Their religion was mainly based on self-discipline of a high order and not on ceremonial rites and worship. Such being the case, they aimed at cultural and educational advancement at the beginning and recondite aspect of their religion came only next to their cultural interest. This suited the popular inclination very well. Wherever they went, they studied the language of the people and their wide learning and culture made them masters of the several languages with which they came into contact. Their consecrated life allowed them to work ceaselessly with a single-hearted devotion to this cause. Their interest was not narrow. They applied themselves to the study of logic, mathematics, astronomy and other branches of learning with equal ardour. Perhaps grammar was their favourite. It is no wonder that they mastered Tamil and began to take a leading part[1] in all the literary and cultural activities of the Tamil country. They had not yet tasted the intoxicating sweetness of power and they were working harmoniously with the Brahmins on the one hand and the common people on the other.

We have no specific record of the activities of Varjranandi's Sangha; but the remarkable output of grammatical and ethical works soon after the establishment of the Sangha is evidence enough of great achievement.

[1] Prof. E. J. Rapson (Ancient India, p. 66) says ' They (the Jains) have also played a notable part in the civilisation of Southern India, where the early literary development of the Kanarese and Tamil languages was due, in a great measure, to the labours of Jain monks.'

CHAPTER II

GRAMMATICAL WORKS

Agattiyam

No doubt the earliest grammar known to tradition is *Agattiyam* written by Agastyā, a Brahmin sage. But even he was a member of the first Tamil Sangam, which as mentioned above, owed its origin to the Jains. He was followed by a number of distinguished Jaina grammarians, the chief among whom was Tolkāppīyar.

We shall first deal with Agastya and his grammar. A mass of legendary matter has gathered round him. One legend says that he confined Rāvana in the meshes of his divine music and despatched the Rākshasā far away to Lankā, thus preventing him from exercising his sovereignty in South India. This legend is sought to be extracted from an obscure passage in a Sangam poem (Maduraikkāñji, lines 40-42). Another legend makes him the younger brother of Brahma (Śilappadi-kāram, XII, last four lines). The smaller Śinnamanūr plates (10th cent.) refers to him as the family purohit of the Pāndya kings. He is reputed to be the father of the Tamil language. A Buddhist tradition says that he learned his Tamil from Avalokitesvarā (Vīraśōḻiyam, prefatory verse) A Saiva tradition is equally persistent and avers that he learnt his Tamil from Siva (variously from Muruga). Among the members of the first Sangam he ranks first, even gods like Siva and Muruga coming only after him, according to the commentaries of *Iraiyanār Ahapporul* and Śilappadikāram (VIII, 1. 1-2 com). He is said to have taken his permanent abode in the inaccessible recesses of Podiyil hill, when he retired from the world[1] after civilising the South'. Even here he is not given the rest that he richly deserves. Spurious works on various subjects, magic, medicine, astrology, etc. written by men who lived about a hundred years ago have been fathered upon him.

These legends, no doubt, predispose one to treat Agastya as a myth. But some of the sutras of his Tamil grammar, cited

[1] Caldwell: 'History of Tinnevelly,' p. 6.

in the ancient commentaries, for instance on *Yāpparungalam,* incline us to the view that there was a learned Brahmin known as Agastyā who wrote the first grammar in Tamil. The grammar as a whole is not extant. But some at least of the sutras now available seem genuine productions of an ancient author. Possibly the commentators citing them had before them manuscripts of this ancient work. But a word of caution is necessary. Several spurious sutras also have found their way into these manuscripts and citations made by commentators may not all be taken as genuine Agastyā sutras. Some bear obviously the stamp of modernity on them and these are possible late interpolations in the commentaries themselves[1].

Agastyā is believed to have composed sutras on all the tripartite divisions of the language, traditionally known as iyal, (literature), isai (music), and nāṭakam (dance, drama). This classification of Tamil cannot be traced earlier than 7th century A.D. and probably it was originated by this grammarian about 5th century. Tradition says that he had twelve disciples of whom the chief was Tolkāppiyar. (Purapporuḷ Veṇbāmālai, prefatory verse.) Of the other disciples we know nothing except their names which were probably taken from Pannirupaḍalam noticed below. Seven of these names are found in the commentary of *Yāpparungalam* also. The name of Atankōttāsān is found in the prefatory verse of *Tolkāppiyam.* These twelve are considered to be the joint authors of *Pannirupaḍalam,* a work on Puṟapporuḷ now lost but for a few sutras preserved in the commentaries of *Tolkāppiyam* (Ilampuranar) and perhaps of *Virasōḻiyam.* It consisted of twelve patalas or subjections: Vetci, Karantai, Vanci, Kānci, Uliñai, Nocci, Tumbai, Kaikkilai, Perun-tinai, Vāhai, Pātāṇ, and Potuviyal. The first seven patalas formed the major section *Puṟam;* the next two, Ahappuram and the last three, Purappuram. Some held that Tolkāppiyar was the author of the sub-section vetci; but others like Iḷampūranar hotly contested it. The successive stages in the development of Agastyā legend may be clearly seen from a study in order of

[1] *e.g.* One sutra says eḷḷininṟu eṇṇei edupatu pola ilakkiyattininru edupatum ilakkanam. Another sutra mentions simhala and ila as two different countries-an ignorance which cannot be attribute to any scholar of reputation *(Nannūl,* S. 272 Mylai).

the Rig Veda, the Atharvaveda. The Brhad-devatā, the Mahabharata, the Rāmāyanā,. the Vāyupurānā and of the Matsya-purana. Perhaps the spread of Brahminism in the South by a descendant of the Vedic Agastyā was the basis of these legends. Perhaps he was also, as Poerbatyaraka surmises, the legendary conqueror of or the path-finder to the Archipelago (K.A.N. Sastri's Agastyā).

The legends about Agastyā in Tamil literature partly carry on the Northern fables with embellishments and partly keep a more human standard. A work on Tamil grammar is attributed to him and he is said to be the father of Tamil. Perhaps some one claiming to be a descendant of Agastya wrote a grammar of the Tamil language. But the story that he was the Guru of Tolkāppiyar is of late origin, perhaps of about the 10th century. We cannot place any reliance on this. *Pannirupadalam* in whose pāyiram we find a reference to Agastya being the Guru of Tolkāppiyar (Perāsiriyam, pages 118, 198, 387 Kajhagam Edition) is of doubtful authenticity[2].

Agastya is a hallowed name in the Tamil country held in reverence more by his legendary deeds than by any solid achievements literary or otherwise. His influence, whatever it might have been in the past, is now at zero point. But his reputed disciple Tolkāppiyar was a great figure, perhaps the greatest figure in the Tamil land in those ancient days. Even now, after the lapse of several centuries, his influence is as great as ever. There are modern scholars who want the current Tamil to be regulated by the rules laid down by this great grammarian.

Tolkappiyam

The date of Tolkāppiyar has been a disputed point. But, there are very strong grounds for holding that he flourished during the second half of the 5th century A.D. We have already discussed it in detail in Part I.

He was a Jain by persuasion, for the Jaina classification[1] of lives (jīva) and non-lives (ajīva) is found in the marapiyal (sutrās

[1] Aindra System of Sanskrit Grammar: Dr. A.C. Burnell, 1875. For a full discussion of the subject, I may refer the reader to Tamil-Chudar Manigal, pp. 11-26.

[2] Agastiyam is referred to as the original grammatical work in these passages in the commentry (Editor).

27-33). The prefatory verse to his work calls him padimaiyoñ, that is one who observes the Jain vow known as Padimai. It mentions that the merits of his great grammar were tested and approved by Atankōttāsān, *i.e.*, the teacher of Atankōdu, in the learned assembly of Nilan-taru-tiruviṛ pāṇḍyan. It is interesting to note that Atankōdu is a village in the Vilavangōdu taluk in South Travancore. Very likely Tolkāppiyar also was a South Tranvancorean and some of his sutras (I, 241, 287, 378) relate to a linguistic usage which has survived even today in the current Malayalam language.

Who this Pandyan is, there is no means of ascertaining. As the name is applied to a Chera king (Padirṛu-pattu 82) and also to god Vishnu (Madüraikkāanji I.763), it is simply a descriptive and not a proper name. Ilampūranar identifies the king with a certain Jaya-mākīrti;[1] but students of Sangam literature are well aware that no such king existed in the so-called Sangam period.

The author of this prefatory verse is Panampāranār. An author of similar name has a poem in *Kuṟuntogai (52).* There is also a grammarian of that name, the author of Panampāram, some of whose sutras are preserved in the commentaries on *Yāpparungalam* and *Nannūl.* The author of the *Kuṟuntogai* poem must have lived several decades earlier. Very probably he was among the last of the poets whose poems found entry in the early Anthologies. The grammarian might have been an elder contemporary of Tolkāppiyar and identical with the author of the prefatory verse.

Tolkāppiyam consists of three adhikāras or sections. The first section deals with phonology and accidence in nine sub-sections or *iyals;* the second section, with syntax in nine *iyals;* and the third with poetical themes, rhetoric *(rasās,* figure of speech), prosody and usages in nine *iyals.* In the sub-section on phonology, it may be noted with interest that the letter forms of the consonants, in particular of *m,* and of short e and o are given in nūn-marapu (13-17). In the same sub-section, we find an important piece of original investigation. The structure of words has been studied and the sequence of sounds noted with care

[1] The name is perhaps of Jain origin. A Jaina poet of this name wrote Silovaisamata in 116 Prakrit Gathas-Winternitz, H.I.L., II, p. 561.

(sutras 23-30). This is a feature which has not been found elsewhere in the whole range of Indian grammatical literature, not excluding *Pāninīyam*. The peculiarity of the Tamil language in which the short 'u' plays such an important part is also adequately treated.

The next section, *i.e.*, on syntax continues the treatment of accidence or morphology in the earlier sub-sections. As Tamil is an agglutinative language we see the necessity of treating its morphology in *extenso*. Parts of speech are next dealt with; we find four parts of speech, *viz.*, peyar (noun), vinai (verb), idai (particles, increments, augments, etc) and uri (indeclinables, adjuncts, etc). These correspond to the four parts of speech, in Sanskrit, *viz.*, *nāma, ākhyāta, upasarga* and *nipāta*. The last sub-section on *uri* mainly consists of lexical matter. Tolkāppiyar had liberal views regarding the vocabulary of Tamil language. He says that the poetic or literary vocabulary consists of common native words, artificial or affected words consisting of homonyms and synonyms, provincial and local words and Sanksrit words (echchaviyal, I). Besides making this general observation, he provides us a cardinal principle for our guidance. He tells us that, if in course of time new words get into currency, they should not, on the score of their newness, be treated as unacceptable (echchaviyal 56). So far as Sanskrit words are concerned, he uses several of them in his grammar. He defines sanskrit technical terms, *e.g.*, *sūttiram, patalam, pindam* (Seyyul 161), *ambōtarangam* (Seyyul 145), and *Kandigai* (marapu 98). He formulates rules regarding Sanskrit words, *e.g.* Bharani etc. (Uyir mayangiyal 45), chiṭṭirai phalakai (pullimayangiyal 79), tāmarai (Sanskrit. tāmarasa, pullimayangiyal 98). He translates Sanskrit terms, *e.g.* Tam vērrumai= Sanskrit vibhakti; avaiyalmoḷi=asabhya; nūl=sutra.

Also he translated Sanskrit sutras (e.g. pirappiyal 1=Panini Siksha 12; meyppāṭṭiyal 3=Bharata Natya Sastra, VI, 15). He refers to classifications mentioned in Sanskrit works such as the eight kinds of marriage (Kalaviyal 1), ten kinds of poetic defects (marapiyal 95, 105) and thirty-two kinds of uktis (marapiyal 95, 107). In addition to the above Sanskrit elements, he uses several Prākrit words also, *e.g.*, paiyuḷ (uri 45), Kāmam (uri 59), paṇṇatti (Seyyuliyal 173), paḍimai (ahattinai 30), etc. He adopts Prakrit sutras, *e.g.*, the 21st and 22nd sutras of Molimarapu

corresponds to two sutras of *Prākrita-prakāsam* (1: 36, 42).

The third section, that is, on poetic themes, etc., deserves careful examination. Some sub-sections, the first five, are believed to throw much light on the social customs of the ancient Tamils. The sub-sections one, three, four and five treat of love-themes and the second sub-section, of non-love themes, technically known as *'aham'* and *'puṟam'* respectively. Taking *Aham* first some general considerations relating thereto are first mentioned in the first *iyal* (ahattinai-iyal). There are seven love-aspects or *tiṇais,* including the five regional *tiṇais*. The first, known as *kaikiḷai,* is the one-sided love of man for an immature girl. The last, known as *perundiṇai* is the unequal love leading to excesses. The five regional *tiṇais* deal with mutual love reciprocated in equal degree, between a youth and a maid well matched in every respect. These are called regional because the Tamil land is divided into five regions–mountainous (kuṟinji), forest or pastoral (mullai), agricultural (marudam), maritime (neydal) and desert (pālai) to each of which a particular love-act is ascribed. This reciprocated love is divided into two kinds, pre-marital love and marital love; the former being called *kaḷavu* and latter *kaṟpu. Kaḷavu,* Tolkappiyar takes care to add, corresponds to the Ghandharva union of the Aryan system of marriages, made famous by the union of Dushyanta and Sakuntala. The third sub-section deals with *kaḷavu* and the fourth with *kaṟpu.* The fifth sub-section, *poruḷiyal* and sixteen sutras (177-192) of *Seyyuḷiyal* treat of some miscellaneous matters relating to love. The second sub-section deals with non-love themes (puṟatinai) whose sub-divisions have been noticed already.

Even this rough outline is sufficient to show the utterly artificial, or at best conventional character of the treatment. Tolkāppiyar himself recognises the distinction between art and reality in a sutra (ahattiṇai 56). The former he calls *nātaka-vaḻakku* and the latter *ulagiyal-vaḻakku,* corresponding to *nāṭya dharmi* and *lōka dharmi* of Bharata Nāṭya Sāstra (Ch. XIV, 69-73). Hence one must be careful when trying to find out any substratum of reality beneath the artificialities mentioned above. To deduce the existence of free love in ancient Tamilakam on the evidence of these artificialities is to follow the will-o-the-wisp. The *tiṇais* may have had some meaning and function in pre-Tolkāppiyam

days; but they never had any influence on the development of Tamil literature. To-day, as it has been for many centuries past, they have no meaning except for the antiquarian.

But we may absolve Tolkāppiyar of all responsibility for originating these *tiṇais*. Even in the opening sutra of the third section, he refers to previous authors collectively. As Tolkāppiyar was a Jain, perhaps we owe to Jain authors these infelicitous classifications. At any rate, the conception of the meeting of the lovers in a grove, all alone, their mutual love of equal intensity and their immediate union so characteristic of the pre-marital love of regional *tiṇais* (kaḷavu) corresponds to the Jain conception of enjoyment in *bhoga-bhūmi.*[1] The famous commentator on *Tirukkuṟal* defines kalavu[2] as the sanctionless union of two lovers who remain changeless being free from disease, old age and death, who are well-matched in beauty, wealth, age, family, character, love, etc., and who meet each other induced by fate, all alone with no one in their vicinity. The commentator has developed the idea of bhoga-bhūmi and made the utterly conventional character quite obvious. But Tolkāppiyar, be it said, keeps the extra-mundane aspect entirely in the background and is more in accordance with the spirit of the love-lyrics of the Sangam age. He is mainly concerned with the several situations when the various characters in the stray love-scenes are entitled to speak. It is only the later grammarians that have tried to piece together a connected love-drama and made it schematic and thoroughly conventional.

Besides the poetic themes, the third section of *Tolkāppiyam* contains a sub-section on sentiments and their physical manifestations, another on figure of speech, a third on prosody and, finally, a sub-section on literary usage. These sub-sections show a master mind of extraordinary profundity of learning. The chapters on sentiments and figures of speech are no doubt based upon works like Bharata Nātya Sāstra; but the treatment shows a rare inwardness, a brilliant expository power and a crystal clear formulation peculiar to the author. His sub-sections on prosody and on literary usage are master-pieces of their

[1] Vive Divākaram, XII,97; Cūḷamani; turavu, 186-193, Iraiyanār commentary p. 12.

[2] Kāmattu-p-pāl: Kaḷaviyal, introduction, Parimel-Alagar.

kind. His deep knowledge of the works of the earlier grammarians, his thoroughness on the mechanistic side of prosody and his accuracy in ascertaining the usage of words have not been approached by any grammarian since his time.

More than twenty works on grammer are cited in the valuable commentary on *Yāpparungalam.* But none of them seems to be definitely earlier than *Tolkāppiyam.* Some may be contemporaneous. *Mā-purānam* and *Bhūta-purānam* are held to be such. But *Mā-purānam* contains *sūtras* in veṇba metre, countrary to the earlier conception of *sūtra.* It may be a late work of a very inferior quality. Nothing is known of *Bhūta-puṛānam. Avinayam* and *Panambaram* are most probably contemporaneous with *Tolkāppiyam.* Of these, *Avinayam* seems to have been a work of exceptional merit, and there was a commentary on it by Raja-pavittira-pallavadaraiyar, as noted by Mayilaināthar in his commentary on *Nannūl.* There was a compendium to the prosody section of this work, known as *Nālaḍi Nārpadu* [1]. Both the text of *Avinayam* and the commentary are now lost. A few of the grammars followed *Tolkāppiyam,* in their treatment of the subject and were definitely later. Such for instance were *Palkāyam, Palkāppiyam, Sirukākkaipāḍiniyam* and *Kākkaipāḍniyam.* A tradition says that *Sirukākkaipāḍiniyam* was a contemporaneous work, as its author was a co-disciple with Tolkāppiyar. But this tradition cannot be relied upon, as the work deals with metres which came into use in later time. Among the later grammars which deserve special mention is *Mayēchchuraryāppu.* Evidently this was a work entirely devoted to prosody, as its name shows. The author made a comparative study of prosody in both Sanskrit and Tamil, imported several notions found in Sanskrit works on prosody and rhetoric, and explained his sutras with ample illustrative stanzas. He is largely quoted in the commentary on *Yāpparungalam* and from the terms in which he is referred to, we may infer that he lived not far removed from the time of the commentator. He may be assigned to the 8th or the 9th century, A.D.

'Sen Tamil'

Before leaving Tolkāppiyar's age, a word must be said regarding standard Tamil or 'Sen Tamil' as it is called by him.

[1] See Yāpparungalak-kārigai, 1. Commentary.

For the first time in the history of Tamil language, this term is used by Tolkāppiyar. It is not found anywhere in the entire Sangam collections. Its importance may be easily recognised. There is said to be a Sen Tamil area surrounded by twelve districts which were the source of provincialism (tiśaic-col). Neither the limits of the Sen Tamil area nor the twelve districts are mentioned by Tolkāppiyar. But, since he gives the number twelve, it must be presumed that the Sen Tamil area and the adjoining districts were well-known in his time. The commentators name the districts with instances of provincialisms from each of them, and they also define the limits of the Sen Tamil land as a small area round about Madurai. We may infer from this that during Tolkāppiyar's time, an elementary notion, at least, of linguistic geography was prevalent. An advance on the knowledge of the Sangam poets is certainly observable here. Of the twelve districts, we hear only of three, viz., Kuḍā-nādu, Pūli-nāḍu, and Punanāḍu in Sangam works; we hear also of three tribes, *viz.*,Kuttuvar, Vēḷir, and Aruvāḷar from which three more districts might be inferred. The rest are unknown.

How did this Tamil of Madurai area become the Standard Tamil? It could not have taken place overnight by the mere fiat of a king. It must have been the result of a long course of development due to natural causes. Madurai was the far-famed capital of the ancient Pāṇḍyas. Pliny the Elder (A.D. 24-79) says in his Naturalis Historia (bk-VI, ch. 23) published in A.D. 77 that Pandian used to reign, dwelling at a great distance from the mart, in a town in the interior of the country called 'Madura'. Its position in the extreme south of the Indian Peninsula made it comparatively immune from foreign molestations. Trade both inland and foreign flourished. The Roman *aureus* circulated freely in Southern India and Roman bronze small change, partly minted at Madurai, was commonly used in the bazaars.[1] Thus the political and commercial importance as well as the consequent wealth of the city were great attractions. Religion also was another source of attraction. The festivals and the festivities of the city cast their glamour over the mofussil people. The desire of the cultured men in the outlying areas to profit themselves through the religious discourses in the city

[1] V.A. Smith: Early History of India, p. 462.

became keener day by day. Learning was still another source of attraction and the thirst for knowledge made the people eager to visit the locality where it was available. As a consequence, the intercourse between the people of the city and of the surrounding districts became frequent. Strangers began to settle within the city-limits. As a result, the language of the capital became less and less determined by locality and became more and more the Tamil of the whole Tamilakam. As the prestige of the city grew, the Tamilians in general began to look upon its language as the Tamil par excellence which would be understood and accepted everywhere in Tamil land. We know that learned men gathered together in the royal court of Pāṇḍyan and held discussions. They also, under the king's command, assessed the merits of literary and other works and compiled anthologies, etc. This made scholars and poets look to Madura for literary guidance. The language of Madurai became the norm. Great literary figures such as Māngudi-marutan, Nakkīrar, etc., gave a certain impetus to what was already moving. They were regarded as literary models, and the imitation of their literary excellence led to imitations of their language on the part of some who otherwise would neither have spoken nor written the common language; their idioms came then to be known in wider circles than that of other private individuals. In short, they served as a unifying force in the matter of language. We know too that ' singers and reciters used to travel from the court of one petty king or prince to that of another and were everywhere well received and richly rewarded for entertaining their hosts by the recitation of long poems and stories. ' They were in many cases compelled to compose or recite their poems in some kind of common speech which was equally well understood everywhere. In this way a poetical or literary language was formed.

Another important fact also should be noted. It is only the language of the upper class that is ordinarily imitated and spread. In the case of ' Sen Tamil ' also such must have been the case. Tolkāppiyar's sutra defining *vaḻakku* or usage (Marapiyal, 89) supports this view fully.

It must not be supposed, however, that the language of Madurai was pure in any way and that, for this reason it found acceptance everwhere. It had its dialectal angularities and

peculiarities which jarred upon the ears of outsiders; but they all disappeared through the pressure of human intercourse detailed above and the language underwent a purification. This purified or standard language may be compared with the composite photographs of Sir Francis Galton, the founder of Eugenics. 'If you photograph a number of people (of the same or similar race) one over another on the same plate, you get a picture in which all small divergences from the normal vanish, and type is shown in its purity. Portraits thus produced are strikingly handsome. In the same way, perfectly purged of dialect it becomes a sort of ideal language, to which real language can only approximate. '

Such being the nature of Standard Tamil, it could have been used by Tolkāppiyar only after the language was firmly established by usage, literary and otherwise, and the grammatical speculation has so far advanced as to perceive the distinction between the standard language and dialectal varieties. These considerations also prove that the great grammarian lived after the early Sangam poems had all been composed, collected and become the common heritage of the Tamils. The term ' Sen Tamil ' corresponds exactly with 'Samskrit' and it would be fruitful to investigate when this latter term came into existence. It seems the expression occurs for the first time in the Rāmāyaṇa (Sundara Ch. 30, 17 and 18). A.B. Keith says in his History of Sanskrit literature, (-5) that the grammarians produced ' a form of expression well ordered and purified, worthy of the name Sanskrit which the Rāmāyaṇa *first* accords to it '. But one may doubt whether it is used here as a technical term in contra-distinction to Prākṛta. In Lalitavistara this technical sense of the term seems to occur. Probably the term in its technical sense may not be found before the time of Patanjali.

CHAPTER III

THE DIDACTIC WORKS

The smooth and gentle flow of harmony that existed till the end of the 5th century was ruffled by the logicians. Their erudition, their pride in their own learning and their thirst for victory over their rivals and alien religionists created an atmosphere tense with acrimonious controversies. Dignāga was the founder of Buddhist logic and one of the foremost figures in the history of Indian philosophy; but among his successors we may mention Dharmapāla's pupil Chandrakīrti (6th century) born in Southern India. Among Jain lógicians, Uṇāsvāṭi and Siddhasēna-Divākara (533 A.D.) are well-known. Pakshilasvāmin Vātsyāyana and Uddyōtakara (A.D. 620) are Hindu logicians. Though these are all Sanskrit writers, they seem to have exercised great influence over their co-religionists in the Tamil areas also. Challenges and controversies were frequent. There was one element which fanned the flame of controversy to red-heat and that was bhakti. This movement began in the 6th century, caught the imagination of the people and spread rapidly. The controversy which had hitherto been conducted on a generally intellectual level became now coloured with emotion and the sectarian spirit consequently deepened. It gathered momentum as time passed and changed to purely emotional level. The common people took it up at this level and the bhakti cult became a popular movement. Naturally it was Hinduism which headed this movement; the other religions, Buddhism, and Jainism, lagged far behind, as they laid more emphasis on unemotional ethical conduct than on any devotion to a personal God. Buddhism was mainly academic in its tone and activities. It concentrated its activities in preserving and transcribing the sacred Buddhist texts, in writing commentaries and in founding monasteries here and there. The Jains were accommodating to popular wishes, for proselytism on a large-scale was also one of their main objects. They studied and mastered the language of the people, wrote important works in that language and through such works sought to gain the allegiance of the people. First of all, they composed gnomic and didactic poems. To this phase of the Jain activity, we owe the immortal *Kuṟal.*

The Kural

The Tamil Jains claim that the author of the *Kuṟaḷ* was the famous Kundakundācāvyā who had epithets Vakragrīva, Elācārya, and Gridhrapichcha and whose original name was Padmanandin. But he wrote his learned works only in Prakrit and he could not have been the author of this famous work in Tamil. Samaya-Divākara, the author of the commentary on *Nīlakēsi*, cites this frequently as ' em-ōttu ' that is ' our authority ' (e.g. 32, 6 comm.); but nowhere he ascribed this authoritative work to Kundakunda. The confusion has arisen because of the slight resemblance in sound between Elācārya and Vaḷḷuvar, the real author of the work. An enterprising researcher has tried to identify Elelasinga, a supposed friend of Vaḷḷuvar with Elārā of the Ceylonese chronicles (Sen Tamil, VII, p. 232) and made the confusion worse confounded. A bad case invites worse arguments.

About Vaḷḷuvar, very little is known. Tradition says that he was an outcaste by birth. This might well be true, as the name itself suggests. This tradition adds that he was the issue of a union between a Brahmin Yāḷidatta and a woman of pariah caste (Gnānāmirutan, ahaval). Some think that he was a weaver by caste, relying on a late spurious stanza found in a fable which purports to be his life-history. Some others suggest that he must have been a Vellala, since he praises agriculture which is the peculiar occupation of this caste. A scholar opines that Vaḷḷuvar does not denote a caste; but merely means a person noted for his liberality. Another scholar equates vaḷḷuva with vallabha on inscriptional authority, takes the term to mean a superintendent and infers that he was a king's officer (M. Raghava Iyengar's Ārāicchitokuti, pp. 206-209). There is some justification for this view; but tradition would not have forgotton it, had it been a fact. Moreover the expression ul-patu-karuma-t-talaivar given in Divākaram (II, 29) as a definition of Vaḷḷuvar had in Tamil, the technical sense of the chief of the proclaiming boys analogous to a trumpet-major of an army (See Comm. on VIII, 1-13 of Silappadikāram.) This agrees entirely with the traditional interpretation.

The birth place of Vaḷḷuvar is equally a matter of controversy. Tradition says that it was Mylapore, long known to have been a Jain centre. Some scholars say, on the strength of a stanza occurring in *Tiruvaḷḷuvamālai* (st. 21) that it was Madurai. This

city also was a stronghold of Jainism from the 5th to 7th century A.D. when it was finally overthrown by the Saiva Saint Sambandar. The religion of Vaḷḷuvar has also been a favourite topic of discussion among scholars. But that he was a Jain admits of no doubt. The epithets 'malar-misai-yē-kinān' (literally he who walked on the lotus-flowers), 'aṟavāḻi-antaṇan' (lit. the Brahmin who had the wheel of dharma) and ' eṇguṇattān ' (lit. he of the eight-fold qualities) which Vaḷḷuvar gives to his God (ch. 1, 3, 8, 9) clinch the question once for all. All the three epithets are jointly and severally applicable to Arhat alone and to none else. Even Parimēlaḻagar, the orthodox Hindu commentator had to admit this, though somewhat reluctantly. The earlier commentators of Vaḷḷuvar's great work were Jains and Samaya-Divākarar's citing it as ' em-ōttu ' already noted, is strong evidence.

The greatest problem of all is the date of this Tamil genius. From references to his *Kuṟaḷ* in *Śilappadikāram and Manimekalai* which are claimed to have been written in the 2nd century A.D., he has been assigned to the 1st century A.D. or B.C.[1] But this date of the above kāvyas are no longer accepted. There are very strong grounds for concluding that these works were composed circa 800 A.D. and we shall discuss this matter later on. Independently of Silappadikāram, it is possible to arrive at an approximate date for Vaḷḷuvar. His *Kuṟaḷ*, as is well-known, is one of the *Kīḻ-k-Kaṇakku* works (didactic manuals) and these are always distinguished from the earlier Sangam anthologies. In point of date, they are later works and their authors are called by Pērāśiriyar and other commentators 'pir-cānṟōr' (lit. great men of later times). Vide *Tolkāppiyam* Seyyul-iyal S. 158, 235 comm. Even the most conservative of scholars hold that the Sangam Age began only in about the 2nd century A.D. and so Vaḷḷuvar's date could not be earlier than this. A study of his work reveals that he is largely indebted to well-known treatises in Sanskrit, such as Manu, Kauṭilya, Kāmandaka, Ayurvedic treatises and Kāma-sūtra. *Kuṟaḷ* 41 and 47 emphasising the importance of the Grahasthas (house-holders) are based upon Manu III, 78. *Kuṟaḷ 58* describing the merits of a married woman who bestows loving care on her husband owes its idea to Manu V, 155. *Kuṟaḷ* 396

[1] One writer in Kalaik-kadir (Jan., 1950) says that Vaḷḷuvar lived in circa 250 B.C. Some people have recently made an effort to start a Vaḷḷuvar Era, beginning from January, 30 B.C.

which says ' the more men study the more is their knowledge ' and exemplifies this, saying the deeper a pond in a sand-bed is dug, the greater will be the springwater, has a parallel in Manu II, 218. Instances can be muliplied. Similarly *Kuṟaḷ* 501 which gives in detail the methods of testing the faithfulness of ministers and other officers is undoubtedly based upon Kautilya, adhikarana I, Adhyāya 10, treating of the four kinds of Upadhās. So also *Kuṟaḷs* 431 and 432 which enumerate the six kinds of faults in a king are taken from Kauṭilya, adhikarana I, adhyāya 6, treating of arishad-varga. Vaḷḷuvar in his detailed treatment of the seven constituents of a State follows the order given by Kāmandaka (IV, I). *Kuṟaḷ* 385 about the acquisition of wealth, etc. mentions the same four kinds of acts as those stated in Kāmandaka I, 20. *Kuṟaḷ* 581 which says that the spies are the eyes of a king is indebted to Kāmandaka XIII, 28, 29, 31. Moreover, in the omission of details and in giving prominence to didactic morality, the *Kuṟaḷ* follows the Nītisāra of Kāmandaka (Keith, p. 460) *Kuṟaḷs* 948, 949, and 950 dealing with the treatment of patients have taken their ideas from Ayurvedic works. Finally *Kuṟaḷ*, 1101, stating that the pleasures of the five senses are all found, in the person of one's beloved, is a beautiful rendering of an idea in Kāma-sūtra, 1, 2, 11. In the same way, *Kuṟaḷ* 1312, referring to the convention of wishing one long life if one sneezes has perhaps for its basis Kama-sūtra VI, 2, 15. Of these works, the date of Manu-Smṛti can be fixed only within large limits and the date of Kauṭilya's Arthasāstra is open to grave doubts, most of our Indian scholars placing it in the third century B.C. and the western scholars in the third century A.D.[1] (A. B. Keith: A History of Sanskrit literature, p. 461; Winternitz: History of Indian literature, German Edition, Vol III, p. 523). Kāma-sūtra is assigned to A.D. 400 by both Keith (p. 461) and Winternitz (Vol. III, p. 540), though the former is inclined to give it a later date, 500 A.D. (p. 469). As for Kāmandaka's Nītisāra to which Vaḷḷuvar seems to have a greater partiality, all are agreed that it is a still later work. Keith says that its date may be c. 700, though others have put it contemporaneous with Varāhamihira, (p. 463). Most probably, the latter view is nearer the truth and Nītisāra might very well be assigned to A.D. 550. Taking into consideration the dates of these Sanskrit works, we are compelled to conclude

[1] The contemporaneity of Chānakya and Chandragupta is mentioned in the Mahavamsa-tika written between 1000 and 1250 A.D. and in the Parisista-parvan of the Trisasti-salaka-purusa Charita (A.D. 1160-1172) by Hemachandra–vide Winternitz, H.I. L., Vol. II, pp. 217 and 507.

that the earliest date to which Vaḷḷuvar can be assigned is 600 A.D. This date accords well with our date for Tolkāppiyar to whose work Vaḷḷuvar is indebted. Compare *Kuṟaḷ* 28 with Seyyuḷ-iyal 179 of *Tolkāppiyam*.

The above conclusion is strengthened by linguistic considerations also. A study of the word-content of the Tamil works of different periods reveals the fact the Sanskrit words and expressions have been increasing gradually as time advances and this forms one of the main features in the growth of the Tamil language. There is a higher percentage of Sanskrit words in the *Kuṟaḷ*[1] than in the early Sangam works and in the *Tolkāppiam*. This is a clear indication that *Kuṟaḷ* is of later date than *Tolkāppiyam*.

Not only this. New forms of functional words appear in the *Kuṟaḷ* for the first time in the history of Tamil language. [2] So we shall be fairly justified in concluding that Vaḷḷuvar lived about the time of Appar, that is about A.D. 600.

Vaḷḷuvar's great work consists of three books, the first book treating of *aṟam* (dharma), the second, of *poruḷ* (artha), and the third, of *inbam* (kāma). There are 37 chapters in the first book the first four called *pāyiram* (which by the way is a Prākrit word) or prefatory matter (invocation, etc.), the next twenty about *Ill-aṟam* (gṛihastha-āśrama) and the next thirteen about *tuṟavaṟam* (sanyāsa āśrama). The second book on *poruḷ* contains seventy chapters, the first twenty-five dealing with kings, their duties, etc., the succeeding thirty-two chapters, with the rest of the constituent elements of a state, and the next thirteen, with miscellaneous matters. The third book on *inbam* contains twenty-five chapters, the first seven being on pre-marital love (kaḷavu) and the next eighteen on marital love. There are thus one hundred and thirty-three chapters in all–each chapter containing ten couplets in the metre known as Kuṟaḷ. Hence

[1] For a list of Sanskrit words in the Kuṟal, see Tamil-Chudar-Manigal, pp. 72-3.

[2] Nouns, including those of *uyar-tiṇai* category, have begun take the suffix 'gal' to denote plural *(e.g. Pūriyargal, 919)*. Verbs have begun to take the infix of 'āninṟu' to denote the present tense *(e.g. iṟavāninṟa*, 1157) and the termination 'an' has begun to take the place of 'al' indicating future tense of 1st person, singular *(eg., irappan, 1067)*.

The subjunctive endings '*ēl*' (enin enil ēl: 386) and ānāl (ā-y-in āyin-āl-ānāl: 53) are late arrivals very far from the 'in' ending of the Sangam post-fixing themselves to the roots ' en ' and ā respectively. The adverbial ending ' mal ' added to the negative particle ' a ' with verbal themes as in *sey-y-ā-mal* (101, 313) is unknown to early Sangam works, the earlier ending being ' tu ' as in *Naṟṟiṇai* 306. So also is the negative ' al-l-āl ' meaning except, the earlier from being ' anri ', as in *naṟṟinai* 27. Moreover ' vān ', ' pān ' and 'pākku ' are late endings of verbal participles. Of these, two occur in the *kuṟaḷ-aṟivān (701)*,

it has become usual to call the work itself by the name *Kuraḷ*, though it is fairly certain that the name given by the author was *Muppāl* or the trichoromous (book).[1]

Never before, nor since, did words of such profound wisdom issue forth from any sage in the Tamil land. It is true that Vaḷḷuvar drew his material from Sanskrit sources, as indicated above; but his genius transmuted them into real gold. Manu had features which were peculiar to his own time and to the times of his subsequent redactors. His society was godordained, hierarchic in its structure and unalterably fixed by the Karmic influence. It denied equality between man and man, in the eye of the law. Kauṭilya was more a politician than a statesman. He found in his great work room for a state-craft motivated by an unquenching thirst for conquest and characterised by a mechanistic efficiency and thoroughness which we now associate with the Germans. He would consider humane considerations a weakness. Vātsyāyana devoted himself in his *Kāmasūtra* to a treatment of carnal pleasure in all its ramifications and he had no eyes for the ennobling aspect of love which is one of the most fundamental urges in human nature. Vaḷḷuvar, the Tamil sage, excels each one of these ancients in his respective sphere. He makes humanity and love the cementing force of society, and considerations of birth are of no account to him. His political wisdom is characterised by a breadth of vision at once noble and elevating. The sexual love which he depicts with inimitable grace and delicacy is idealistic, even if it be schematic and mannered. Its romance is ethereal and carries us to an atmosphere where purity of emotion, freshness and beauty reign supreme. No wonder his great work took by storm the learned Academicians of Madurai as tradition would have it. The utter simplicity of his language, his crystal clear utterances, precise and forceful, his brevity, his choice diction, no less his inwardness,

karappāku (1127, 1129) and *vēpākku* (1128). Finally in the case of words which have been *changing their forms in course of time, later forms are found in Kuṟal–pōḷu (412, 539).* 569, 930 and 1229). Besides these, many new words which are definitely known to have been in use about the beginning of the 7th century A.D. and not earlier are found in *Vaḷḷuvar's Kural*. Examples are *oppāri* (1071, Appar V, 3, 1), *paṭṭi*(1074, Appar V, 5, 1), *māḍu*, (wealth: 400, Appar V, 77, 4), *tuchchu* (340, Appar IV, 69, 8), *pākkiyam* (Kural 1141, Appar V, 48, 6), *Pūsanai* (18, Appar IV, 76, 4), *nāman* (360, Appar V, 90, 5), *kodu* (1264, Appar V, 5, 8).

[1] See Tamil-chudar-maṇigaḷ, pp. 83-88.

his learning, culture and wisdom, his catholicity and eclecticism, his gentle humour and wholesome counsel have made him an object of veneration for all time and his book is considered the Veda of the Tamils. The genius of the Tamil race has flowered to perfection in this great author believed to be a man of lowly birth.

The influence which his work, since its publication, exercised over the mind, life and literature of the Tamils is phenomenal. Gods and goddesses and poets of different times considered to be members of the Madurai Academy, are believed to have poured out their grateful encomia in verses collected together under the name of *Tiruvaḷḷuva-Mālai.* Almost all the later poets are indebted to this work in one way or another. Some have enshrined a few of Vaḷḷuvar's sayings in their own verses. Some have composed works illustrating selected sayings with puranic and other stories. Several poets have been inspired to compose works on didactic morality, an apparently inexhaustible theme. Several learned scholars, as many as ten have tried to understand the mind of Vaḷḷuvar by writing commentaries on the work, the greatest of ten all being Parimēlaḷagar, a Brahmin commentator of the fourteenth century. Some scholars have written notes and glosses on the commentaries themselves. Above all, the work itself has been the subject of reverent study ever since its appearance. People of all ages, from children to old men, of all sorts and conditions, and of all religious persuasions have been devoutly studying this work, that followers of every religion began to claim him as their won. In short, he became a universal poet and his work became a universal work, appealing to the widest human interests and the simplest human emotions. When law courts were first instituted in our country, the judges and lawyers used to cite the *Kuṟaḷ* as a authority. Like the Bible, it was held sacred and used in administering oath to witnesses in courts. Even at the present day, it is studied as much as ever and it has been translated into several European languages.

Kilk-Kanakku Works

The inspiration kindled by Vaḷḷuvar produced a few works very much on the same lines as the *Kuṟaḷ*. The *Nālaḍi Nānūṟu* (lit. the four hundred quatrains) was one of these. According

to tradition, it was a selection of four-hundred stanzas from out of eight thousand stanzas by eight thousand Jaina ascetics, the selection being based on the miraculous way in which the stanzas established their merit, going up the river Vaigai against its strong current. But we may infer that it was the joint production of some Jaina ascetics, the stanzas being collected, classified topically and made into an anthology by one Padumanār of later times. When it was thus collected, it is impossible to say. The collection is mentioned in the commentaries of *Yāpparungalam, Yāpparungalkkārigai.*[1] The commentaries on the first two treatises were most probably written in the twelth century.[2] So the collection must have been made before this date. As it is frequently quoted as a work of great authority and as it is referred to with great reverence (*e.g.* Nālaḍittevar), a few centuries must have elapsed between the date of its collection and the date of these references. We may be certain of one thing. Two stanzas of the work (200, 296) speak eulogistically about the rich feasting and the great wealth of a Perumuttaraiyar. The Muttaraiya family came into prominence only at the beginning of the seventh century and Peru-muttaraiyar, referred to was most probably Perum-biḍugu-muttaraiya, the feudatory of Paramesvaravarman Pallava I who had the title Perum-biḍugu and who flourished in the middle of the seventh century.[3] Some of the Nālaḍi stanzas are either translations or adaptations from the Sanskrit Pañca-tantra, and Bharatrihari's *Nitisataka* (d. 651). A *Muttaraiyar Kōvai* is mentioned in the commentary of Yāpparungalam (p. 486) and its hero is perhaps this Perumbiḍugu-muttaraiya. This is made very probable by the fact that some *ahapporul* stanzas in *Kalitturai* metre are found in the Sendalai inscription, relating to this Muttaraiya.[4] These facts lead us to conclude that some of the Nāladi stanzas were composed about the middle of the seventh century A.D. At the earliest the collection could have been made about A.D. 675 or 700. We may also note that there are some striking

[1] p. 150 of Dr. V.S. Iyer's edition, and *Nannūl* (Mylai: p. 14).

[2] M. Raghava Iyengar's Sāsanat-tamilk-kavi-caritam, Page 39-44 and my Kāvya period in Tamil literature.

[3] Sen-Tamil VI, Pages 6-18.

[4] Sen-Tamil X, pages 228-236 and 281-288.

parallels between *Kuṟaḷ* and the *Nāladi Nanūṟu*, and the latter is also counted as one of the *Kīḻk-kaṇakku works.*

Another *Kīḻk-kaṇakku* work which appeared a little later was *Paḻamoḻi Nanūṟu.* Its author was Munṟuṟai-araiyan, a Jaina chieftain of Munṟuṟai place not yet identified. Some of the deeds attributed to the vaḷḷals of the Sangam period are in this work mentioned as ancient events.[1] Some stories relating to the Sangam celebrities but not found in Sangam poems are given in this work (6, 230, 239, 381). The episodes of Manunīti-kaṇḍa Chola and Poṟkaippāṇḍyan which do not occur in Sangam poems and which are found in Śilappadikāram only (XX, 53-55; XXIII, 42-53) are referred to in this work, the first as having occurred in ancient days. It may be noted here that the earliest mention of this episode is found in the Mahāvamsa (21, 15 ff) of fifth century A.D. Moreover this work is largely indebted to *Nāladi Nānūṟu* and others works.[2] A variety of paddy known as ' pirampuṟi ' occurs both in *Paḻamoli* and in Appar IV, 20, 7. Two inscriptional usages maricāti (118), manṟiviṭal (288) find place in this work. Considering these facts, we may conclude that *Paḻamoḻi* was probably composed c. A.D. 725.

Siṟu-pañcha-mūlam and *Elādi* are two other didactic works belonging to the *Kīḻk-kaṇakku* group. They are by the Jaina poets, Makkāriyāsān and Kaṇi-mēdāviyār, both pupils of Māk-kāyanār. As the first work treats of five things in each stanza and the second of six things, we may take it that the former was the earlier of the two. It is interesting to note that the story of the notoriously hypocritical cat is referred to *Siṟu-pañcha-mūlam.*[3] With uplifted arms the cat performs severe austerities on the banks of the Ganges; and he is ostensibly so pious and good that not only the birds worship, but even the mice entrust themselves to his protection. He declares himself willing to protect them but says that in consequence of his asceticism he is so weak that he cannot move. Therefore the mice must carry him to the river–where he devours them and grows fat. This story is found in Mahābhārata–(V, 160).

[1] Stanza 74 of T. Chelvakesavaraya Mudaliar's edition.

[2] e.g. 49=Nāladi, 70=Naladi 141; 79=Nāladi, 186; 95=Naladi, 112 etc.

[3] Stanza 102, Madras University edition.

' Durnāmaka ' is a technical term for piles and this occurs along with other technical terms of diseases in St. 76. The name durnamaka occurs in *Ashtanga hridaya* and *Amarakōsa* (c. A.D. 700). In St. 54 five persons are enumerated as those who are to protect woman, *viz.*, husband, brother, uncle, son and father. Manu (V, 147-149) mentions only three, father, husband and son. This again argues a late date. Finally this work is greatly indebted to *Paḻamoḻi*, a few stanzas occurring in both with slight variations.[1] Hence we may reasonably assign this work to c. A.D. 800. *Ēlādi* owes much to *Sirū-pañcha-mūlam.*[2] So it may also be assigned to the first quarter of the ninth century A.D. To the same date may be referred another work of *kilk-kaṇakku, Tinaimālai-nūṟṟaimbadu,* by the same author Kaṇi-mēdāviyar on *ahapporuḷ.*

It was not only Jains that were inspired by Valluvar's great work. Hindu works also drew their inspiration from the same source. *Tirikaḍukgam* of about 100 stanzas was the earliest of such works. Its author was Nallādanār, a Vaishnavaite who belonged to Tiruttu near Mukkūdal in Tirunelveli District. It treats of three things in each stanza. Besides its obvious indebtedness to *Kuṟal,* it owes much to *Nālaḍiyar* also.[3] Hence its date may be about 725. Next comes *Nānmanikkaḍigai* which treats of four things in each stanza. The author of this work also is a Vaishnavaite, Viḷambināganār by name. Viḷambi may be either a place name or a professional name. This work also consists of 100 stanzas. Its scheme shows that it was written after *Tirikaḍugam,* of which some of its stanzas seem to be echoes.[4] Hence it may be assigned to c. A.D. 750. The next work that may be taken is *Mudu-moḻik-kāñji.* This consists of ten sections, each of ten verse-lines. The title seems to be modelled on the name of *Paḻamoḻi,* and a definition of it is found in *Divākaram* (following Tol. purat. 24) and in *Puṟap-poruḷ*

[1] Siṟupancha-muḻam 18 = Palamoḻi 398; Siṟu. 22, 23 = Pala. 399.

[2] Compare stanza 75-77 of the former with stanzas 37 and 36 of the latter respectively.

[3] Compare stanzas 9 & 76 of Tirikadugam with 340 & 380 of Naladiyar respectively.

[4] See Nanmani 22 & Tiri 11.

Venbā-mālai (sec. 269). That is largely indebted to *Kuṟaḷ* is obvious.[1] It also uses very late words.[2] So we may assign *Mudu-moḻik-kāñji* to c. A.D. 775. *Innā-naṟpadu* (the sour forty) probably appeared next. The commentator on *Virasōḻiyam* (p. 52) mentions this work first and then only *Iniyavai-nāṟpadu* (the sweet forty), and in manuscripts also the same order is observed. Its author is Kapila-dēvar, apparently a different person from the Sangam poet, Kapilar. There are numerous parallels between this work on the one hand and *Tirikaḍugam* and Paḻamoḻi on the other.[3] Most probably *Innā-nāṟpadu* is the borrower. A number of late words also occur, perhaps for the first time in language.[4] We may assign this work to c. A.D. 800. Upon this work *Iniyavai-nāṟpadu* is directly based, as may be seen by comparing st. 5 with st. 23 of *Innā-nāṟpadu*. It has also borrowed largely from *Tirikaḍugam*.[5] Brahma worship in temples is mentioned in the invocatory stanza. This and the words *poliśai* (st. 40) and *Kudar* (st. 12) betray the lateness of the work. Pūdañ-jēndanār is the author and the date of the work may be about A.D. 825.

Closely connected with the above works on morals is another *Āchārak-kōvai* which deals with rules of conduct, customs and daily observances of the Hindus. Its author was Muḷḷiyār of Vaṇgayattūr, son of Peruvāy. It consists of one-hundred stanzas based upon materials drawn, as the author avows (st. 1), from the Sanskrit Smṛits. *Āpastamba Gṛhya Sutra, Āpastamba Dharma sūtra, Bhaudhayana Dharma Sūtra, Gautama Sūtra, Vishnu Dharma Sūtra, Vaśishtha Dharma Sūtra, Manusmṛiti, Yājnavalkya Smṛiti, Vishnu Purānam, Parāśara Smṛiti, Usanas-Sannitā, Saṅkha*

[1] See 1, 1 and *Kuṟaḷ 134; 1, 6* and *Kuṟaḷ 1019, 1, 7* and *Kuṟaḷ 409; 2, 5* and *Kuṟal 429; 2, 6* and *Kuṟaḷ 979; 3, 3* and *Kuṟaḷ 611; 4, 8* and *Kuṟal 651; 5, 2 and Kuṟaḷ 61; 6, 8 and Kuṟaḷ 238; 6, 7 and Kuṟaḷ 1043 etc.,*

[2] *e.g. Kuttiram (2, 7), mippu (3, 2)* and a late phrase *són-mālai.* Kuttiram is found in *Divākaram* only, mīppu in the commentary of *Puṟanānuṟu* and Son-mālai in *Murugaṟṟuppadai* and in *Appar's devaram (IV, 12, 1).*

[3] Compare *Innā.* 24, 30, 31, 38, 41 *Tiri.* 81, 20, 20, 6 & 63 respectively and *Innā.* 15, 22 with *Paḻamoḻi* 214, 226 respectively.

[4] *e.g.* Idangali, **12;** sattiyān, 1; veṟum, 39; pākku, 40.

[5] *e.g.* Ini. **31 and** Tiri. 63 where the similarity is quite obvious.

Smṛiti, Laghu Hārita Smṛti are all laid under contribution. Often the original is literally translated. The *Laghu Hārita smṛiti* is placed by Kane between A.D. 600 and 900. This gives us some indication as to when the *Achārak-kōvai* was composed. There are parallel ideas between this work and some of the *Kiḻk-Kaṇakku.*[1] We may assign this work to about A.D. 825.

We have so far dealt with twelve works of *Kiḻk-kaṇakku* and there are six works more. Of these five treat of *aham* subject matter and one work, *Kaḷavaḻi,* treats of the destruction wrought on a battle field, a subject-matter of *puṟam.* The five aham works are *Kainnilai* by Pullankāḍnār of Māṟōgattu-muḷḷināḍu, *Aintiṇaiy-aimbadu* by Māṟan Poṟaiyanār, *Aindiṇaiy-eḻupadu* by Mūvādiyār, Kārnāṟpadu by Maduraik-kaṇṇan Kūttanār and *Tiṇaimoḻiy-aimbadu* by Kaṇṇan-Sēndanār. Nothing is known about these authors. Perhaps Kūttanār and Sēndanār were brothers, both being sons of Kaṇṇan. *Kāinnilai* which consists of 60 stanzas uses *tārā* (duck) in st. 40, a word which occurs in *Tiṇaimālai-nūṟṟaimbadu* (139) and which is unkown in any earlier work. That the work last mentioned is definitely later than *Kuṟaḷ* may be inferred from the use of such expression as *Sempākam* (69 *Kuṟaḷ* 1092), *oruvantam* (103 *Kuṟaḷ* 563 and 593) and from the reference in St. to *Kural* 247. It is also later than *Kalittogai.* Compare st. 52, 53 and *Kali.* 149; *Vantaiya* (st. 138 *Kali* 63), *Vayantakam* (st. 121=Kaḷi 79). But it is earlier than *chintanmaṇi:* comp. 47 with *Chinta.* Ilakkanai 80. Such late words as āṭṭai (st. 143) in the sense of lord, *alankāram* (st. 127), *suvarkkam* (st. 62), *nāikar* (st. 134), *pālikai, calikai* (51) *tāra* (st. 139) and the inscriptional sense of the word *virutti* (st. 121) enable us to fix the approximate date of the work. The date given above may be taken as reasonably certain. It may be observed that the author is not so felicitous in his expression in his *Ēlādi* as he is in this work on *Aham. Kārnāṟpadu* (40) uses *indu* (shortened from īndu, date-palm) which also occurs in *Tiṇai-mālai-nuṟṟaimbadu* (104) only. The word *pōtaru* occurs both in *Tiṇaimalai aimbadu* (29) and *Tiṇai-mālai-nūṟṟaimbadu* (71). We may infer that these three works were almost contemporaneous with *Tiṇai-*

Acara. 11=Inna 3. So also parallelism exists between Iniyavai Narpadu (19) and Acara.(4 & 34). But Tirikadugam 4 is probably followed in Acara. 68.

mālai-nūrraimbadu. Aindiṇaiy-aimbadu and Aindiṇaiy-elupadu were probably slightly earlier. All the five works may be assigned to the first quarter of the ninth century.

The last work *kaḷavaḷi* presents a problem which is somewhat difficult of solution. According to the colophon at the end of the work, a fight took place at Pōrp-puram[1] between Solan Sengaṇṇān and Chēramān Kaṇaik-kāl Irumporai, when the latter was completely routed, taken captive and put in prison. Poygaiyār, the poet composed this poem in praise of the victor and got the Chēramān released. We do not know who added this colophon; but it is followed in later works.[2] A different tradition is found under the 74th stanza of *Puranānūru* in the colophon explaining the occasion when it was composed. It is said that the Chēramaṅ while in prison wanted water to slake his thirst. Water was first refused and later on given. Then the Chēra felt the indignity and without drinking the water, gave up his life (tuñjinān). Some scholar's interpret this word to mean 'fell into a swoon ', but this is against its commonest meaning. We may note that the stanza does not refer to any king by name and the occasion detailed above does not find support in the stanza itself. Moreover, the colophon does not say anything about the poet Poygaiyār or about the release effected by him. The *Tamil Nāvalar Charitai* improves the occasion and adds that the stanza was sent by Sengaṇṇān to Poygaiyār. Save in this colophon, neither Sōlan Sengaṇṇān nor Chēramān-Kanaikkāl-Irumporai occur anywhere else in the whole of the Sangam literature A Kaṇaiyan is mentioned in st. 44 and 386 of *Ahanānūru*. Kaṇaiyan of Aham 44 being merely a Chera commander-in-chief fighting with the help of Nannan and some other confederates of his and the Kaṇaiyan of Aham 386 is just a wrestler. Poygaiyār was the author of three poems (Narrinai 18, Puram 48 and 49). In the *Narrinai* stanza, Kaṇaikkal is not referred to and the *Puram* stanzas mention: Chēramān Kōk-kodaimārpan as the poet's patron and *not* Kaṇaikkāl. Hence, so far as the colophon in *Puranānūru*

[1] Another battle took place here between Chēramān Kudakko-Nedunceral-ādan and Cholan Vēr-pahratakkai Peruvirarkillaipuram 62, 63 & 368.

[2] Kalingattup-parani (182), Vikkiramasōlan Ulā (14), Kulottungaśolan Ulā (19) and Rājarājan Ulā (18).

is concerned, we may set it aside as a late addition by some one who wanted to add to the picturesqueness of the stanza by giving unauthenticated details. The colophon at the end of *Kaḷavaḻi* is not worth a moment's notice as it is directly contradicted by the poem itself. St. 39 says clearly and the old commentary makes the meaning clearer still, that the Chēra King was killed in the battle. So the traditions embodied in the colophon have no historical foundation at all. A new light is thrown on the matter by the old commentary on the *Kulōttunga-śōlan Ulā (11, 19-20)* published by Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer. It says that the king who got the *Kaḷavaḻi* was ' Tanjai Vijayālayan ', the founder of the later Chola dynasty. It was probably copied from an old manuscript by Chidambaranāthan of Paṟṟamadai (Tirunelveli District) in A.D. 1640. The commentator is unknown; but whoever he may be, he shows a fairly accurate knowledge of South Indian History during Chola period. Most probably his identification is correct, and if that be so, the slender information we possess of Vijayālayan's activities is slightly increased. We know that his son Āditya I conquered Kongudēśa and governed it in addition to his own.[1] Vijayālayan also may have made an earlier but similar attempt, though it did not materialise in the shape of a conquered territory. To celebrate this attempt which perhaps ended in the death of the Chera enemy, Poygaiyār composed *Kaḷavali,* basing his poem on a contemporary historical fact, but ascribing it to an earlier King well-known to tradition as a builder of Saivaite Temples. The poem mentions, the defeat of Konga people (14), capture of Kaḻumalam, the scene of battle (36) and compares the Chōla victor to Senganmāl (Vishnu) in several stanzas (st. 4, 5, 11, 15, 29, 30, 40). The last mentioned comparison gave the author of the colophon the idea of making Cholan Sengaṇṇān, the hero of the poem. Since Vijayālayā's date is about A.D. 850, the poem also must be assigned to that date. The poem has taken some of its ideas from *Perungadai*[2] and has supplied a good many ideas to *Chintāmani.*[3] This fact also suits very well

[1] Kongudēsa Rājākkal, page 10 (Madras Govt. Oriental Series).

[2] *(e.g.)*, 1 and Perun, II, 20, 11. 80-84; 7 and Perun. I, 11. 81-84.

[3] *(e.g.)* 9 and Chin. 2236; 4 and Chin. 18; 26 and Chin. 2242.

with the date we have assigned. Some words also found in *Kaḷavaḷi* also support this date.[1]

We have been, thus far, considering the activities of the Jains mainly in regard to ethical literature and the activities of their co-religionists, the Hindus trying to emulate them. The literary attempts of the followers of both the religions on love themes have also been mentioned in some detail. The ethical themes tended towards an idealistic atmosphere and the love-themes towards an imaginative atmosphere. Both the kinds of literature developed a literary style, learned, polished, artistic and reminiscential. Their diction is in the main archaic, sweet and felicitous, occasionally enlivened with words in current speech, raised by force of usage to the rank and dignity of literary words. But neither school was in intimate association with life as then lived and with the current language as then spoken except in a large sense. Even such work as *Kaḷavaḷi,* which aimed at the approbation of a living King and which could do so with success only if the approach was real, looks too reminiscential in style and hankers too much after figurativeness to be of lasting, permanent interest. But there were exceptions like the *Kuṟaḷ* and the *Nānmaṇikkadigai* whose glory shines all the brighter in the murky atmosphere which enveloped them.

[1] *(e.g.)* inga. (Stanza 21 & 41), Mārvam (21), tōṭṭam (24), Kaṇṇāḍi (28), arasuvā (35) and uvaman (36).

CHAPTER IV

BHAKTI MOVEMENT

Let us now hark back to the time when the immortal *Kural* came into being. There was a bloodless revolution in the Tamil country slowly working its way to a tremendous power. The success of the Jains set them athinking and a rival religious force strong enough to stem the tide of the over-spreading Jainism had to be created. The ancient religion of Hinduism served as a power-house generating the requisite force. The Brahmin centres of learning known as ' ghatikas ' were select and exclusive in their constitution. The Yāga performance as still more solemn and it was more rigid in its exclusion of the Non-Brahmins. Neither in the *ghatikas* nor in the *yāgas* were the people at large allowed to participate. Brahminism had to be transformed into Hinduism in which all and sundry could take part. In this transformation, the Puranic lore was the main plank. People loved to hear tales of gods and goddesses, often times miraculous and of their still savouring human weaknesses. An absolute belief in the most extravagant miracles alleged to have been worked by these deities and an implicit acceptance of every monstrous detail of their legendary history were insisted on. The relationship of the human soul to the divine was described in the language of human love, and illustrated with images and allegories, suggestive of conjugal union. The long course of development of *aham* in Tamil literature and grammar gave a peculiar relish to Tamil poets in treating of this relationship. Puranas came to be written for the express purpose of exalting one deity or the other to highest position. Siva and Vishnu were the two serious rivals to this place of honour. Some puranas exalted Siva at the expense of Vishnu and some Puranas did the reverse. Hagiology and hegiolatry followed soon and the great *Bhakti* cult originated. In the practice of this cult, the followers knew no distinction of caste, at least temporarily. They saw that the popularity of the doctrines inculcated by them depended on their attracting adherents from all ranks, high and low. Hence most of the great religious revivalists proclaimed the social equality of all who enrolled themselves

in the same society, as worshippers of the same deity. Another fact may also be noted. However much the devotees of Vishnu and Siva differed and quarrelled among themselves, they showed equal vigour in contending against Jainism.

Political powers also took sides in this grim battle of religion, and whichever the religion the kings embraced and espoused it commanded the greatest influence among the people and it became, for the nonce, the state religion. Sometimes, these religious squabbles invaded the precincts of royal households and set their members one against the other, queens working against their kings and ministers intriguing against their royal masters. But whatever disunion such partisanship of political powers created both in the families and outside, it did a lasting benefit to the country. Big temples with towers of enormous proportions were constructed by them. Temple walls and towers were adorned with beautiful paintings, festivals were instituted with grants of lands for their annual performances, musical entertainments and dances in the temples were arranged for. Thus several of the fine arts received encouragement. More than all, these structures became centres of education also. Itihāsās and Purānās were expounded here for the benefit of the masses, including women and Non-Brahmins. Though Vedic and auxiliary studies received their due share of attention in the temple halls, we are not at the moment concerned with them. The Bhakti movement attracted large crowds of people of every sort and it became a popular movement in the real sense of the word. Even learned Non-Brahmins who had embraced the Jain religion on conviction returned to their old fold and worked for the propagation of the religion of their birth. Brahmins of liberal spirit dared to join the Bhakti movement which set at nought all rules of caste and they soon occupied the van of this advancing force. Controversies rose to a high pitch. The popular feeling became a powerful weapon which a leader could not neglect and it had to be kept red-hot, never being allowed to languish. Large concourses of people went from place to place chanting their way, visiting temples old and newly built, and offering worship. In front of the deity, they poured out their hearts in fervant recitation of songs composed by their leaders and such joint recitations necessitated a kind of simple chorus music in which any one could join. Thus developed the *paṇ*

system of music, so peculiar to the Tamils. It must not be supposed that the *paṇs* were invented by the religious leaders. The oldest of them were presumably popular melodies to which in very early times semi-religious songs were sung at communal celebrations and national festivals, and we may compare their origin and development with those of the ancient music of the Sama Veda.[1] But from our point of view the most important result of the religious movement is its reaction on the Tamil language. The language of the masses and their racy idiom got into the very texture of the literary language, and made an appeal to them at once direct, clear and forceful. The Sanskritic diction of the Brahmin leaders was another element which added to the richness of the Tamil diction. Mainly on account of this admixture, the Tamil language became flexible and resilient. Music also, however simple it might be, was a help in this direction. Thus the language of the people prevailed and the literary language so artificially and arduously cultivated mainly by the Jains took a back seat for a time.

The sixth century saw the beginning of the Bhakti movement and in the course of a century, the movement developed, gathered strength and momentum and reached its culminating point about the first quarter of the seventh century. The great Itihasas were translated into Tamil, the Mahābhāratam first and then the Rāmāyaṇam. We have seen that the Mahabharatam may have been translated by Peruṇdēvanār whose poems shined as the invocations at the head of some of the Sangam anthologies.

Saiva Saints

About the Rāmāyaṇam translation, no information is available. The commentary on *Yappaungalam* (sutra 62 p. 196) mentions a *Rāmāyanam* in *pahroḍai veṇbā* metre. This was perhaps the earliest translation of Ramayanam and it may be ascribed to c. A.D. 650. These two epics in Tamil must have provided ample material to excite the interest of the Tamils in mythological stories of national importance and the Bhakti cult drew its sustenance from the inexhaustible store of these ancient legends. Two separate but parallel movements are noticeable, one Saivite and the other Vaishnavite. The first great saint-poet among the Saivities was Tiru-nāvukkarasu. He is also variously known as

[1] Winternitz, H.I.L., page 167.

Appar or Vāgīśa. He is considered to have lived during the time of Pallava Mahendravarman I (A.D. 600-630), at first a convert to Jainism. Appar mastered the Jaina lore and became by sheer merit the head of the Jaina mutt at Tiruppādirippuliyūr (Pātalipuram), the modern Cuddalore in the South Arcot District. Later on disatisfied with the Jaina doctrine, he came back penitent to the religion of his birth. Through his influence Mahendravarman; the Jaina, king, became a convert to Saivism. With all the zeal of a neophyte, this king destroyed the Jaina temple at Padalipuram and built with the material Saivite temple at Tiruvadigai, naming the deity Gunabhara after his own title.[1] But the saint was not interested in such deeds of intolerance. He travelled from place to place, offering worship at the temples and singing the glory of the Lord in a company of Bhaktas (devotees). The bhaktas increased in number and his fame spread, not only as a great bhakta but also as a poet who sang the praises of Siva in melodious language with a rare appeal to earnest souls seeking spiritual communion. Sundarar says (stanza beginning with aṇikolāḍaiyam) that Appar composed 49,000 hymns though we have only 311 padigas or 3,110 hymns at present.[2] Not given to verbosity or florid style, his poems are simple, soulful utterances which reach the innermost recesses of our being. In a particular kind of composition, *tāṇḍaka,* he has no equal and he has rightly earned the name ' tāṇḍake-vēndu ' (master of tāndaka).

In one of his pilgrimages, he heard of a younger saint-poet, Tirugnāna Sambandar, and hurried to Sīkāli (Sirkazhi) where the latter lived. Sambandar heard of this and went in advance to receive him. Appar made obeisance by falling at Sambandar's feet which the latter reciprocated and then embraced him in utter abandonment of ecstatic frenzy. It may be mentioned here that Appar refers to Sambandar in his Devāram (IV, 56, 1; V, 50, 8). Sambandar was a young brahmin boy of Sirkazhi, precocious in his learning, piety and saintly life. Too young to walk to the several distant shrines, he was carried by his doting father on his shoulders. Unlike his elder and more sober contemporary, this young prodigy thirsted for controversies with

[1] Periya Puranam, Tirunāvukkarasu. 145, 146.

[2] For a discussion about Devaram hymns, see Sen Tamil I, PP. 439-447.

the Jains. And with his smiling face, his charming personality, his prodigious learning, his resourcefulness and his argumentative powers, he always came out successful. He was a terror to the Jains wherever he went. He had a large coterie of disciples and comrades[1] among whom we might mention Siruttoṇḍar, alias Paranjōti. The latter led, for the Pallava king an expeditionary force to Vātāpi, the ancient capital of the Chalukyas, won a great victory and razed the city to dust.[2] So Siruttoṇḍar and Sambandar must have flourished about A.D. 650. The saint's progress to the Pandya country deserves special mention. The king of this country, like Mahendravarman I, was a Jain. His queen was a Chōla princess[3] and she was a saivite by religion. Deeply concerned for the spiritual welfare of her lord, she, with the assistance of the minister Kulachchirai,[4] sent messengers to Sambandar imploring him to visit her capital Madurai, convert her lord to Saivaism and rescue the country from the evil influence of the Jains. Sambandar agreed and proceeded to Madurai, visiting temples on the way and offering worship. At Madurai, a controversy took place between the Saivaite Saint and a Jaina leader and the latter was worsted. Never more did the Jains regain their political influence in the South. They confined themselves to literary, scientific and cultural activities. It may be noted in passing that the cultural centre which was Madurai during the Sangam age, shifted north to the Chola country during the age of this Hindu revival.

Amidst his busy life, this young saint found time to compose an enormous number of devotional lyrics. Nambi-Āṇḍar-Nambi says that he sang 16,000 padigams.[5] Perhaps padigam here means single stanza and not decad. Even so, the total output is prodigious, and we have at present only 384 padigams or 3,840 lyrics of remarkable beauty and felicity of expression. A padigam of 11 stanzas on Tiruviḍaivāy of Nannilam Taluk, in Thanjavur District was recovered four years back, from an

[1] Sambandar I, 61, 10; III, 63, 7 & 8; Āḷuḍaiyapiḷḷaiyār Tiruvulāmālai: ll. 71-73.

[2] Periapuranam, Siruttondar, 6.

[3] Sambandar III, 120, 1.

[4] Sambandar III, 120, 4.

[5] Āḷuḍaiyapiḷḷaiyār Tiruvulāmālai l. 63.

inscription of twelfth century[1] A.R.E. 1913 p. 147). The style of the hymns is ornate and the language picturesque; but there is only a very moderate quantum of emotional appeal. The title Tamiḻākaran (lit. the ocean of Tamil learning) by which he is frequently called by Nambi-Andar-Naṃbi[2] describes him aptly.

Prodigies are generally short-lived and our saint, as his biographer Sēkkiḻar says, entered with his bride and others the divine glory at the time of his marriage. An old stanza says that this took place in his sixteenth year.[3]

During the half a century after Sambandar, there lived six poets of importance in the Saivaite world, and they are all mentioned in the *Tirut-toṇḍat-togai* of Sundarar. The first among them is the lady saint Kāraik-kāl Ammaiyar. She was the author of two padigams, of an *Irattai-maṇimālai* and of *Aṛpudat-tiruvandādi,* the total number of stanzas being 143. Of these, the last named poem is deservedly popular.[4] The next poet mentioned by Sundarar is Tirumular, the well - known mystic. He was the author of *Tirumandiramālai* or *Tirumandiram,* as it is popularly called, consisting of a little over 3,000 stanzas.[5] Tirumūlar is said to have lived for 3,000 years and composed at the rate of one stanza every year.[6] But in Tirumandiram itself a stanza says that the author lived for seven crores of yugams before he composed the work (st. 74). He claims that Patanjali, clearly the author of Yogasūtra and not of Mahābhāshya was his co-disciple under Nandi. The work contains a lot of Tantric and Āgamic matters. A good deal of similarity exists between this work and *Tiruvāśagam.* It is interesting to note that one of its stanzas (204) is cited with a slight variation in the commentary of *Yāpparungalam* (Sutra 93, p. 288 MVV Edition). Most probably the date of Tirumandiram is about the first quarter of the eighth

[1] A.R.E. 1913 p. 147

[2] Aludaiyapillaiyar Tirukkalambagam 33.

[3] K.S. Srinivasa Pillai in his *Tamil-Varalaru* (PP 49-54) gives A.D. 655 as the date of Sambandar's demise.

[4] Two stanzas beginning with 'vanji veḷiya and Karaipparperu' are ascribed to this poetess and Auvaiyar jointly by Nachchinārkiniyar (Tol. Śeyyul, Nachch. S.72 p.74 Kazhagam Edition). Contrary to this the former stanza is ascribed to Poygaiyar exclusively (yāp. comm. S.93 p.286 MVV Edition) and the latter to Bhūtattār and Kāraikkārpēyar jointly (yap. comm. S.93 p.288 MVV Edition) by the commentator on Yāpparungalam. Poigaiyār and Bhūtattār, it must be noted, are vaishnava saints. Kāraikkārpēyār may be assigned to c. 700 A.D.

[5] Tirumantira 99.

[6] Periyapuranam, Tirumula, 26, 27.

century.[1] Aiyaḍigaḷ-kādavarkōn is another poet who sang about sacred places in *Kshētrat-t-tiruvenbā.* The poem consists of 24 stanzas and as many as 22 shrines are mentioned. As the name indicates, the poet was an ascetic belonging to the Pallava royal family. Finally *Tirut-toṇḍat-togai* refers to a poet Kāri by name. This poet composed a *Kōvai* in Tamil, and named it *Kārik-kovai,* as the *Periya purāṇam* clearly states. Nothing more is known about him or his *Kovai.*

The poet-saint who has mentioned all these and many more Saiva devotees is Sundaramurthi-nāyanār, an adi-śaiva of Tirunāvalur. His date is fairly certain, as he himself says that the king who ruled the sea girt world during his time was Kaḷaṟ-chingan of the Pallava dynasty and canonises this ruler as a Saiva saint. This can be no other than Narasimhavarman II (A.D. 680-700) who built the famous Kailāsanātha Temple at Kāñchī, had the titles 'Sri Sankarabhakta' and 'Sivachūdamani' and who was said to have destroyed all his Karmic impurities by walking the path of ' Saiva Siddhanta ' (Saiva-siddhānta mārgēkshata-sakala-mala[2]. His feudatory who adopted Sundarar was called Narasinga munaiy-araiyan after his name and Sundarar himself refers to him. These are very strong grounds for assigning this poef to the beginning of the eighth century. A.D.

The number of padigams, probably stanzas or hymns, sung by the poet is traditionally given as 38,000; but we have at

[1] Tirumular himself seems to refer to the Dēvāram hymns of Sambandar, Appar and Sundarar (st. 76) and to the five *maṇḍaṇḍalas* of the Tamil country (1646). All that Sundarar says of him is 'I am the slave of the slaves of our master Tirumulan.' Nambi-Āndār-Nambi says that Tirumular sang devotional hymns. It is only Sekkilar who says that he was author of Tirumandiram. Perhaps Sundarar's Tirumular and the author of Tirumandiram are two different persons. Many late works are found utilised in this work, *e.g.* Tiruman. 2847=Palamoli 339; Tiruman. 2069=Iniyavai 41; Tiruman. 167=Naladi 26. Ashtangayoga of Patanjali (Tiruman. 549-639). Week days are mentioned in vāra-saram vāra-sūlai (Tiruman. 790-798). Very late words also are found used *e.g.* oddiyāṇam (st. 818), tindadi (st. 2779), Olakkam (st. 540), Kaṇkāṇi (st. 2067, tāvaḍi (st. 376), ādambaram (st. 1655). At any rate, there is no doubt that there is a good number of interpolated stanzas in the work.

[2] S. I. I. i, 12-13 See *Alvārgal-Kālanilai* (M. Raghava Iyengar) pp. 135-136. Dr. C. Minkshi's attempt to identify the contemporary king of Sundarar with Nandivarman III (A.D. 835-860) in her 'Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas', p. 299-305, is based on very flimsy grounds. see K.A.N. Sastri's paper 'New Light on later Pallava chronology' in *M.M. Potdar Commemoration Volume*'.

[Dr. K.K. Pillai in the revised second edition 1977 says at Page 24, "The overseas possessioned and influence of Rajasimha were far greater than those of Nandivarman III and he reference to KādavarKōn Kaḷarsirjan appeared to be in famous of Rajasimha only" (P.24) [Editor].]

present only 100 padigams or 1,000 hymns. The condition of the times is reflected in these hymns. The danger to the Saivaite religion from the Jains had disappeared and there is not even a single reference to the Jains in Sundarar's hymns. The storm and stress of religious controversy had cleared and a time had come when a calm spirit prevailed. Even sacred things were made fun of, life was taken easy, and saints too enjoyed the pleasures of the senses without rousing disapprobation. The poet is said to have lived for only 18 years. Within this short life, he married twice, first within his caste and next from a family of danseuses attached to the temple at Tiruvārūr. He served the cause of hagiology by listening to all the Saiva saints upto his time including his own parents. He has also furnished his own autobiography in his verses, and this pleasure-loving saint treated his god as a friend on equal terms who would cater to his foibles and weaknesses. Saivaism had lost its austerity and had assumed a more human aspect, thus making an approach to Vaishnavism.

A contemporary and friend of Sundarar was Chēramān-perumāḷnāyanār, a king of the Chēra country. But this is not the name by which he is called in *Tiruttoṇḍattogai.* Kaḻaṟiṟṟarivār is the name given (st. 6) and it is explained as one who would understand anything spoken by any being.[1] This could not but be a title and the author of *Periyapurāṇam* gives the proper name as Perumāk-kōdaiyār (st. 5). A humorous situation showing his great reverence to bhaktas is referred to by Nambi-Āṇḍār - Nambi and narrated in detail by Sēkkiḻar. When the saint poet accepted the sovereignty of the Cherā kingdom after the death of ' Sengōl-poṟaiyan ', he was taken in a procession through the streets of his capital. On the way he met a man whose body was white with washing-lye. Mistaking him for Saiva devotee besmeared with holy ashes, he got down from his palanquin and fell down at the washerman's feet in obeisance to him. The latter in full horror fell down at the king's feet and cried that he was the king's washerman. The king, in his turn, said he was the 'slave Chera '. But the poems of this Chera do not betray any such eccentricity. They are *Pon-vaṇṇattandādi, Tiruvārūr-mummaṇik-kōvai* and

[1] Periyapurāṇam, Kaḻaṟ. 14.

Tirukkaiyilāyagnāna-vulā and in these we find him a poet of superior order and a learned scholar. The ulā is also variously known as *Ādiy-ula* of *Tiruvulāppuram*. These works are mentioned by Sēkkiḻar.[1] There is absolutely no reference to Sundarar in any of these poems, nor do we find any in Sundarar's *dēvāram* to the Chera saint except the one about Kaḻrirrarivār already mentioned. Yet *Periyapurānam* says that both were very intimate friends and that they visited several shrines together to offer worship. The puraṇam refers also incidentally to a Chola king who had married a Pandya Princess.[2]

The poems deserve to be more widely known and studied. No doubt they follow the Sangam stanzas in their *aham* portions; but they are charming and their style is elevated and dignified. The felicity of expression which the poet wields compels our admiration. We have reason to believe that he was the inventor of a new kind of prabhandha known as *ulā*.[3] They were intended to be and were actually sung during festival processions of deities by the danseuses of the temples. Contemporary life and manners were reflected in these poems and later, the history of the shrine to which these related was also given. The *Adi-ulā* has incorporated two Kuraḷs[4] and refers to the author of the Kuraḷ as 'paṇdaiyōr', the ancient.[5]

Tiruttoṇḍa-togai mentions also a group of poets under the general name *Poyyaḍimaiy-illāda-pulavar* and Nambi-Āṇḍar-Nambi names three poets specifically and they are Kapilar, Paraṇar and Nakkīrar. These names occur among the poets whose poems are collected in the ' Eleventh Tirumurai ' and are different from the Sangam poets who were great

[1] Kalarir. st. 87 and vellanai-47 and the seconds mumaṇi-k-kōvai is also referred to (Kalarir st. 69)

[2] Kalarir. 92

[3] For an interesting note on the textual criticism of this Ula, See *Chēravendar Seyyut-Kōvai* II, 144.

[4] st. 752=Ula. 136-7; st. 1101=11. 175-6.

[5] A tradition in Kerala country says that a certain Chēraman Perumāl became a convert to Muhammadanism, left his Kingdom and went on a pilgrimage to Mecca in A.D. 825, and that the Kollam era was inaugurated in that year to commemorate that event. An enterprising scholar identified this king with our Chēraman Perumal who went to Kailas with his friend Sundarar and assigned both of them to A.D. 825. But it is a well-known fact that the era was started to commemorate the foundation of Quilon. We may summarily dismiss the scholar's identification and date without any comment.

literary luminaries of the ancient period. Nakkīrar, the author of *Tirumurugāṟṟup-paḍai* might seem an exception. But sufficient reason has been shown in the introduction to my edition of the work that he was a different poet from the author of the Sangam poem *Neḍunelvāḍai* and lived much later. Sambandar has a poem on Parankunru; but he has nothing to say about the presence of Muruga in this hill, as do *Murugāṟṟup-paḍai,* and *Paripāḍal.* The Muruga's shrine must have been built after A.D. 650. In the eleventh Tirumuṟai, *Tirumurugāṟṟup-paḍai* is included and we would be perfectly justified in dating this poem and its author to about A.D. 700. The other two poets Kapilar and Paranar of this Tirumuṟai probably flourished about the same time at the earliest. These might very well be later than Sundarar as he does not specifically mention them. The three poets bear the names Kapila-dēvanāyanār, Parana-dēvanāyanār, and Nakkīra-dēvanāyanār sufficient indication that they were different from the Sangam poets. Nambi-Āṇḍar's statement in this respect is not of much historical value.

Nakkīrar is also the author of nine other poems, two of these, are of special literary interest. *Tiruveḷukūṟṟirukkai* is quoted in the commentary on *Yāpparungalam* (S.96 p.411-412 MVV Edn. 1960) with *varia lectio*. Most probably Sambandar's *Eḷukūṟṟirukkai* I, (128) served as a model. *Kāreṭṭu*, contrary to our expectation, is not a poem on *aham* subject-matter. Kapila-dēva-nāyanār is the author of three poems. From his Mūtta-nāyanār *Tiruviraṭṭai-maṇimālai*, two stanzas, (6 and 20) are found cited in Iḷampuraṇar's commentary on Tol. Seyyuliyal (174). Parana-dēvanāyanār is the author of only one poem, *Sivaperumān-Tiruvandādi*. This consists of 101 stanzas in veṇbā-metre and in most of the stanzas, some sacred place of other is mentioned.

The congregational Bhakti of the Saivas as a genuine popular movement probably came to an end about the first half of the eighth century A.D. After Sundarar's time, the movement must have taken a different turn. Individual devotees must have carried on the *bhakti* cult, perhaps in a languid and lifeless manner for about a century more. This period is probably represented by such poets as Adirāvaḍigaḷ, Iḷamperumān-aḍigal and Kallāḍa-dēva-nāyanar, included in the 'Eleventh Tirumuṟai,

In the poems of these authors, the language of the people, the current diction and idiom was shoved into the background and the old literary style was again adopted. They have never been popular and had it not been for their inclusion in the *Tirumurai* they would not have survived at all. Probably Iḷamperumān-aḍigaḷ is identical with Koṭṭārru Iḷamperumānār of the Sendalai inscriptions.[1]

After this period of decline, we come across Saiva poets, some of them of very great eminence, who had nothing to do with the bhakti movement as such. The name of Mānikkavāsagar stands out in superb splendour among these Saiva poets. During the early days of Tamil literary research, scholars were contending hotly whether this poet lived earlier or later than the three great Saints, Appar, Sambandar and Sundarar. Now scholars are almost unanimous in holding that he was posterior to Sundarar. It need only be mentioned that he refers in his *Tirukkōvaiyār* (306, 207) to Varaguṇa Pāṇḍya II (A.D. 862-880) and to Sankara's (died c. 820 A.D.) doctrine of māyāvāda.[2] A number of divine sports are mentioned by him. We may be certain that he flourished during the latter half of the ninth century A.D.[3]

The *Tiruvāsagam* and the *Tirukkōvaiyār* are the two great works written by the saint. Of these, the first by itself is counted as the ' Eighth Tirumurai '. The second is exclusively a poem on *aham*. But there need be no doubt about the authorship, for it is ascribed to him under the name ' Sivapāddiyar ' by Nambi-Āṇḍar-Nambi in his *Kōyil-tiruppaṇṇiyar-viruttam* (st. 58). It contains 400 stanzas in Kalitturai metre on almost all the approved themes, of *Aham* as a subject-matter, schematically arranged. The felicity of diction and the polished style are noteworthy. One of its stanzas (86) mentions Vishnu's shrine at the entrance of the Nataraja's shrine at Chidambaram. But the *magnum opus* of this poet is his *Tiruvāsagam* which consists of *4 ahavals* and 654 stanzas. It is a modest production so far as quantity goes, but its merit gives it an exalted place among

[1] *Sāsanat-tamilk-kavicharitam, p.19.*

[2] Tiruvāsagam IV. 54-55.

[3] For a detailed study of the question, see 'Sidelights on Tamil authors, II,' Date of Manikka-vāsagar in the 'Annals of Oriental Research,' Vol. VII, Part 1.

the devotional lyrics of the Saivaites. Its sincere and earnest utterances coming as they do from the deepest depth of a great soul, reach the innermost recess of our being making it resound with answering echoes. We hear the voices of the saved and the doomed. Even Silence seems to be a speaker in the poet's rhapsody. The mystic insight into the spiritual world, the bursts of vision lyrically realised and the ecstatic delight stand clear in the poet's words. Expression seems to halt in trying to portray the varied experiences of the poet's soul. From this spiritual height the poet sees the world of common men and women and they look like children playing on the seashore of Eternity. The poet becomes himself a child for the moment and in the simple delightful language of the sporting children sings of truths of great spiritual value. To read *Tiruvāśagam* with intentness and earnestness is to get drunk with joy. The saying goes that if a person does not melt at the sweet strains of this great master, he will never find himself in a melting mood at anything he hears.

Alvars

We have now reached the summit of the Saivaite *bhakti* cult which, in the last resort, intensely personal. A parallel movement, that of the Vaishnavites, began probably somewhat later than the Saivite movement. It is represented by twelve Āḻvārs who flourished between A.D. 700 and 900. The earliest of these are said to be the three Āḻvārs, Poigai, Bhūtam and Pēy and each has sung a centum of *Veṇbās* in ' antādi ' orde. The first centum by Poygai is called ' mudal (first)-tiruvandādi ', though some manuscripts read ' mūtta (elder)-tiruvandādi '. This must have been the earliest of the Vaishnavite hymns and the Áḻvar's utterances where they do not comply with the rules of porosody, are said to be ' ārshas '[1].

[1] Yap. commentary (S.93 p.286 MVV Edition). Two of his stanzas (51, 69) are cited in the commentary (S.57, p.181; S.95 p.378). Two other stanzas beginning with arimalar-aintakani 'and Āli-y-iḻalppa' are also ascribed to Poygai by this commentary (S.57 P.181 S.96 p.427): but they are not hymns at all and we do not know where they are cited from. If any inference can be drawn from the exclusive devotion of this Ālvār and Poygai the poet were two different persons. After all Poygai was the name of a nāḍu (district) and a nagar (town: See Perundogai. st. 2146); and any prominent person hailing from either could be named Poygaiyār. Pēr-āsiriyar refers (Tolkāppiyam. Seyyul. 239) to the antadi of Poygaiyar as an example of Virundu (new composition) and this must be the Alvār's work.

Poygai Āḻvār was born at Kānchi under the asterism Jyeshtha. A record of the ninth year of the Chola king Ko-Parakēsarivarman alias Vikrama Chola Devar (A.D. 1129) registers the gift of 780 kalams of paddy out of the interest of which worship during thirteen days of Jyeshtha, the constellation of Bhūtattāḻvār and Poygai Āḻvār was to be performed every year.[1] Later Guruparamparais give Avittam and Tiruvōṇam as the respective *nakshatras* of these two. Bhūtattaḻvār was born at Tirukkaḍalmallai and Pēyālvar, at Mylapore. All the three Alvars were contemporaries since they are traditionally said to have met for the first time at Tirukkōvalūr (referred to by Poygai and Bhūtam) and afterwards at Tiruvallikkeṅi (reffered to by Pēyāḻvār alone) to enjoy the companionship of Tirumaḻisai whom we notice below. Perhaps Pēyāḻvār was a younger contemporary of the other two Āḻvārs.

About the date of these Āḻvārs, nothing definite is known. Poygaiyār and Pēyār have referred to a Viṇṇagar in st. 77 and 62 of their respective ' antādis '. This Viṇṇagaram is identified by some with Paramēśvara-Viṇṇagaram,[2] and by others with the Nandipura-Viṇṇagaram,[3] this Nandi being taken as Nandivarman I who, it is alleged, was a devotee of Vishnu. Since nothing is known about Nandivarman I except that he was the father of Simhavishnu and the Pallava line itself is known as the Simhavishnu line, the latter identification has to be given up. Moreover, Nandipura-viṇṇagaram, the modern Nāthankoyil is in the Chola country near Kumbakonam, and it was Simhavishnu who brought the region watered by Kaveri for the first time under the Pallavas. Paramēsvara-viṇṇagaram was built by Nandivarman II (731, 796) so called by his personal name which was Paramēsvaran. This identification also may not be accepted. But there is one fact which indisputably settles the question of date. Bhūtattāḻvār has in his ' Iranḍam Tiruvandādi ' (70) referred to Mā-mallai which is no other than the modern Mahābalipuram. Its original name was Mahāmallapūram and in spite of the ingenious arguments put forward to show that

[1] I. M.P. I. cg. 315.

[2] M. Srinivasa Iyengar, *Tamil Studies:* p. 301.

[3] M. Raghava Iyengar, *Alvargal Kalanilai:*pp. 50-51

Māmallai had nothing to do with ' maha-malla '[1], we have to hold to the contrary. The fact is too obvious to be blinked. Even tradition says that this Aḻvār was born at Kaḍal-mallai which is the same as Mahāmallapuram. Now Mahāmalla was the famous Narasimhavarman I (630-660). So Bhūtattāḻvār could have lived only after A.D. 650. We have already stated that he and Kāraikkārpēyār were contemporaries, being joint authors of a stanza and that Kāraikāl would have to be placed about A.D. 700. Poygai and Bhūtam must be assigned to the same period. Pēyāḻvār who was according to tradition, a younger contemporary of theirs, refers also to Viṇṇagar (st. 61-62), Tiruvallikkēṇi (st. 16) and Ashṭabuyakaram (st. 99) in his ' Mūnṟāntiruvantādi '. These three Aḻvārs most probably lived in the first quarter of the eighth century.

Next we may take up Tiruppāṇāḻvār, as he is mentioned immediately after mudal-āḻvārs' in *Rāmānuja-nūṟṟandādi* (st. 11), the earliest and most authoritative work mentioning the Vaishnava saints in a certain order. *Divyasūri Charitam* and Guruparamparais give different orders with several particulars not easily reconciled. But the above ' antādi ', well-known as Prapanna gāyatri ' among Vaishnavaites, seems the most reliable. Tirup-pāṇ, like Tirunīlakaṇṭa-yaḻp-pāṇar of the Saiva hagiology, was a musican of a low caste, but, in addition, he was a poet also. He is the author of a single poem ' amalan-ādi-pirān ' consisting of ten stanzas. The poem must have been set to music, though its tune is not given anywhere. How the divine beauty of the several limbs of Lord Sri Ranganatha affected a lady who had fallen in love with Him is the subject-matter of the poem. The exquisite simplicity of the poem and the deep sincere emotion it evokes make it an outstanding construction among the poems of the Vaishnavaite Tamil saints, generally known as *Nālāyira-Divya-Prabandam*. The ancient musical systems of the Tamils has completely disappeared, but we can appreciate its power and sweetness from this specimen left to us by Tiruppāṇ-āḻvār. There is nothing to indicate the date of this poet except a tradition which states that he lived for 80 years. He belongs to the distinguished galaxy of genuine lyric poets such as Periyāḻvār. Āndaḷ and

[1] *Āḻvārgal Kālanilai* 31-2 and 143. et seqq.

Kulasekharar, and in the world of poetic thought at least, he is nearer to them than to the other Vaishnava saints. Considering the order in the *Ramanuja-Nūrrandādi* and considering also the dates to which Periyālvār and others could be assigned, we may perhaps suggest the first quarter of the ninth century as the date of Triup-paṇ-āḷvār, allowing an interval of a century between the first three Āḷvārs and this Áḷvār. Udarambandhanam (4) and vāram (5) are two late words used by him.

Tirumaḷisai-āḷvār is mentioned next. Credited by legend with a life of 4,300 years, he may be regarded as the Vaishnava counterpart of Tirumūlar, though there is little in common between the āḷvār's views against Saivism and the unconventional cosmopolitan and at times even iconoclastic outlook of Tirumūlar. The story that Tirumaḷisai met the three earliest āḷvārs may indicate that his real date was later than that of Tirumūlar and fell in the ninth century. The miracle of the rejuvenation by Tirumḷisai, of an old prostitute with whom king Pallavaraya fell in love after her youth was restored is apocryphal. It may be that he introduced the use of *srichūrṇa* in the Vaishnava caste-mark *(nāmam)* and this is perhaps commemorated in the story that he discovered the place where the red earth for that mark was available. His *Tiruchchanda Viruttam* and *Fourth Tiruvandādi* are inferior as literature. He mentions the shrines of Tiruvengadam (Tirupathi) and Srīrangam, and many smaller ones including Tiruvallikkēṇi (mod. Triplicane) where a record in the twelfth year of Dantivarman Pallava is found. His verses are reminiscent of the Āchārakkōvai and other works. His date may not be earlier than A.D. 850[1].

Toṇḍar-aḍi-p-poḍi alias Vipra-Nārāyaṇā is next referred to in the Rāmāṇuja-Nūrrantādi. He was also a bigot as his Tirumālai reveals in several stanzas. This poem gives us some valuable evidence regarding its date. But his other poem Tiru-p-paḷḷi-y-eḷuchi is a poem of remarkabale beauty and challenges comparison with Mānikkavāśagar's Tiru-p-paḷḷi-y-eḷuchi. In ancient days, poets were employed to wake up the kings from their sleep, early in the morning with

[1] His use of Gunaparan (Antadi 93) a surname of Mahendravarman I can have no chronological siginificance in the face of much later forms of words like *pōdu-pōkku* (ant. 32) *vāl-āttu* (ibid 38), irukinren (ibid. 41), etc.

their songs and the theme indicating this particular situation was called tuyil-edai-nilai.[1] In still earlier days, trumpeters were employed for this purpose.[2] There was Rajopochara for temple deities in later times, when temples were built and provisions were made for ceremonial rites and festivals–both daily and periodical. One of the daily rites is the waking up of the deity in the mornings and songs were composed to suit the occasion. Māṇikkavasagar's poem is the more refined of the two and Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi's the more natural. On this ground, we might take the latter as slightly the earlier of the two. Toṇḍar-aḍi-p-poḍi refers to two pauranic stories (st. 4, 12 of Tirumālai) and one of them about mudgala (12) is traced to Vishnu dharmottara puranam by an ancient commentator. The other story about Kshatrabandu has been traced by Mr. T.A. Gopinatha Rao to the 17th chapter of the same Purana.[3] This puranam is one of the upa-puranas and its date is sometime between A.D. 628 and 1000, as it extracts Paitamaha Siddanta from the Brahma-Sphuta-Siddhanta written by Brahmagupta in A.D. 628 and as Alberuni (c. 1030 A.D.) has studied this later purana very minutely. This fact gives us the second quarter of the 9th century as the approximate date for the composition of Tirumālai.[4] That Appar has largely influenced the composition of Tirumālai may easily be inferred. The very form of the stanzas is modelled upon Tiru-nērisai of Appar and the second half of Tirumālai 34 is actually found with very slight variation in Appar IV, 75, 3. It may be noted also that the last two lines of Tirukkuruṭāṇḍakam, 13 of Appar. Toṇḍar-aḍi-p-poḍi also uses Olakkam (Tiruppaḷḷi-yeḻucchi, 9), paiyal (Tirumālai, 37), Pōlkkan (*ibid* 33) which are late words and which are not found even in nighantus. His word Kaṇṇaṟā is hardly grammatical. His reference to the squirrel helping Rama in his construction of the causeway between Dhanushkodi and Lanka (Tirumālai 27) is unique. The recitation of Tiru-p-paḷḷiy-eḻuchi in the Srirangam temple is provided in a record of A.D. 1085.

[1] Tol. Purap. 30.

[2] Kautilya, Ch. XIX.

[3] See History of Sri Vaishnavas, p. 20.

[4] Winternitz, H.I.L., I, 580.

Next comes Kulasekhara Āḷvār. In one of his stanzas (II,2) he uses the expression 'Tondar-adi-p-podi' which was most probably adopted by Vipra-Narayana as his surname. So we may be justified in placing him round about A.D. 800. He was a Chera king, most probably of the kongu-Chera line. None of the sacred shrines in the chera country is even referred to by him. There is nothing to betray his nationality except the word 'accan' which occurs in one of his stanzas.[1] He sings about Tiruvēnkatam, Tiruvarangam, Kaṇṇapuram, Ālinagar, Tillai-c-chitrakutam-all in the Chola country. There is a reference to 'Mallai-mānagar'; but Periya-vāechān Pillai the commentator gives a different interpretation altogether. Tillai-c-chitrakutam is the shrine of Govindaraja in Chidambaram, which seems to have come up later than the time of Sundarar who does not mention it. This confirms the date we have already reached. He is the author of 105 stanzas known as Perumal Tirumoḻi, three decads on the lord of Sri Ranga, one decad on the lord of Tiruvēnkadam, another decad on the lord of Vittuvakkōḍu, one decad on Gopika's sulky utterances about Krishna's erratic ways, one decad on Dēvaki's motherly feelings about her misfortune in not being given to bring up Krishna, one decad singing a lullaby to put Krishna to sleep, one decad on Dasaratha's lament on Rama's exile and the last decad on the life-story of Rama associating it with Tillai-c-chitrakuta. Vittuvakkōḍu is identified as a former suburb of Vanchi-Karuvur by Mr. M. Raghava Iyengar and this may be accepted. The sixth, the seventh and the ninth decads reveal great powers of dramatic imagination and place the poet on a high rank. He shows knowledge of the *Kuṟal* in V, 3. His hymn 'tēṭṭarun-tiral' was recited at Sri Rangam according to an inscription of 1085 A.D.[2]

Next we may take up Periyāḻvār and his daughter Āṇḍāḷ. Periyāḻvār is only a surname and his real name was Vittu-c-cittan or Vishnu-cittan. He was a native of Srivilliputtur in Ramanathapuram district and brahmin by birth. He is believed to have been the victor in a religious controversy held at the

[1] Perumāl Tirumoḻi II, 9.

[2] K.A.N. Sastri: Colas II, p. 479.

court of a Pandya King and won a bag of gold in prize. The gold was spent in improving his flower-garden which he dedicated to the services of his deity.

The identity of this Pandya king is a matter of controversy among scholars. Periyāḻvār himself refers to him as Ko-Nedumāṟan (IV, 2,7) and the Guruparamparai works identify him with Sri Vallabhadeva Pandya[1] who had also the name Srimāra. Ko-Nedumaran is taken to be Rajasimha I (c. 740-765) who after conquering a Maḷava king and marrying his daughter, proceeded to Pāṇḍikkoḍumudi and worshipped the lotus feet of Pasupati. He must have been a Saivaite, though he had a minister who was a Vaishnavaite. On the other hand, Sri Vallabha is called by historians as Sri Mara Sri Vallabha (c. 815-862) and he might have been a Vaishnavaite, though nothing definite is known of him. The probability is that this king was the contemporary of Periyāḻvār.

From a reference in Āṇḍāl's *Tiruppāvai* (St. 13) which mentions the setting of Jupiter (viyalam) and the rising of venus (Velli=Sukra), Mr. M. Raghava Iyengar chooses Dec. 18 of A.D. 731 as the date which the poetess had in view and also as the date which fell within the regnal periods of both Ko-Neḏumaran and his adversary, Nandivarman II, Pallava-Malla. But recent researches have brought to light the fact that Paramēsvaravarman II was ruling in 730-731.[2] So, the date chosen by Raghava Iyengar is untenable. But among the alternative dates given by him either A.D. 885 or 886 would meet the astronomical requirements. It might after all be straining the astronomical argument a bit too much. Both Periyāḻvār and Āṇḍāl probably lived round about A.D. 850.

Periāḻvār was the author *Tiruppallaṇḍu,* besides 460 stanzas. We are reminded at once of Sēndanar's *Tiruppallāṇḍu* in the ninth Tirumuṟai of the Saivaites. Śēndanār must have flourished probably in the Ist quarter of the tenth century. Of the 460 stanzas, a major portion deals with the child-life of Sri Krishna under the topics of the Pillait-tamiḻ *prabandha.* This shows

[1] Guruparamparai (1909 edn.), p. 60.

[2] Prof. K.A.N. Sastri ' New Light on Later Pallava chronology in M.M. Potdar commentary volume. Also see Dr. Meenakshi's Administration and social life under the Pallavas" - Revised Edition. p. 47. [Editor]

clearly that Periyaāḻvār could not have lived earlier than the ninth century A.D. The rest deals with the life of Sri Rama. Though his poetry is of a high order, it is his language that arrests our attention. He avoids the learned style and uses colloquialisms, mostly brahmin, of his age. A proverb pandanru pattinam Kāppu[1] very much in vogue during his time is found in a whole decad (V, 2). He introduces Krishna stories which must have been current in the Tamil country in his days, e.g. story of Śīmalikan (II, 7, 8). He refers to Tirukkottiyur and the royal purohit of that place (IV, 4, 8), Tirupper (II 9, 4), Tiruvellarai (I, 5, 8), Tirumāl-irun-jolai (V, 3), Kurungudi (I, 5, 8), and Villipputtur (II, 2, 6).

Āṇḍāl was the author of *Tirup-pāvai,* besides 142 stanzas. *Tirup-pāvai* has already been noticed (ante.) It had its origin from a religious observance among maidens of marriageable age. More details of the practice of this *vrata* in her days become clear from this section. The Jains also have a similar poem; but we do not know when it was composed. This type of poem was called 'pavaippāṭṭu'.[2] In *Paripāḍal* 11, the *vrata* is clearly described and in *Kalittogai* (50) also there is a reference to it. Aṇḍāl seems to refer to her father's Tiruppallāṇḍu.[3] Following her father, she uses colloquial expressions.[4] She uses expressions from previous proverbs[5] and sings about conventional themes like *kuyir-paṭṭu* (V, 1-11). The expression *mārrōlaip-paṭṭavar* (X, 2) seems to have reference to slave dealing. Āṇḍāl takes high rank among religious poets.

Tirumangai Āḻvār is the next saint referred to in the *Ramanuja Nūrrandādi* under the name of Nīlan. He is believed to have been born of Kaḷvar caste and to have a robber's life. The *Divya-sūrichritam* says that he robbed Sri Ranganatha and Sri Āṇḍāl when they were returning to Srivilliputtur. The third wall round the shrine of Srirangam is ascribed to him. He is

[1] cf. Purattirattu, 1562.

[2] Tol. III, 461. See M. Raghava Iyengar's Araychchittokudi, pp. 185-203.

[3] Tiruppāvai, 26.

[4] *e.g.,* Kalakkalital (pavai 6); kisukisu *(ibid. 7);* marumagal *(ibid. 18);* ettanai-potum *(ibid. 19);* ciru-c-cirutu *(ibid. 22);* cirancirukal (ibid. 29); ciramppattom (II, 3); pira-vitai, (III, 7); parakkalittu (XII, 3); mel-appu (XIV, 3).

[5] Punnir-puḷippeydāl-pōla XIII, 1; varivḷaiyil pugundu vandi parrum valakku IX, 3.

the author of 1,361 stanzas, consisting of *Periya-tirumoḷī, Tirukkuruntāṇḍagam, Tiruneḍun-tāṇḍagam, Tiruveḷū-kuṟṟi-rukuai, Śiṟiya-tirumaḍal* and *Periya-tirumaḍal.* He seems to be the most learned of all the Vaishnavaite saints. Though born at Kuṟaiyalūr of Āli-nadu, he spent his last days at Tirukkuṟuṇguḍi in Tirunelveli district. He is referred to by several names, viz, Kalikanṟi, Kaliyan, Parakālan, Aruḷmāri, Araṭṭamukki, etc. These titles indicate perhaps his real profession. He must have lived in stirring times, chosen a military career and won high distinction in it.

This Āḻvār, unlike several of the Tamil poets, has left clear evidence of the time when he flourished. He has sung about Paramesvara Viṇṇagaraṁ (II, 9) which was built by Nandivarman II (A.D. 731-796). The terms in which he refers to this Pallava worshipping the deity shows that it was a past event perhaps lingering in the memory of his generation. He has referred also to Vayirāmēghan (Nandivarman's son,Dantivarman: A.D. 785-836) in his decad on Aṭṭa-bhuya Karam, II, 8, 10). Here Vayiramegha's power and glory are mentioned as things of the past. It may also be noted that in the twelth regnal year (A.D 797) of this Vayiramegha, a certain Pugaḻttuṇai-Visaiyaraiyan redeemed a field of the Parthasarathisvamin temple at Tiru-vallikkēni previously mortgaged by the temple priests, and restored the usual quantity of rice offerings every day.[1] Perhaps this temple was built about A.D. 790. Pugaḻtunai of the inscription was perhaps a descendant of the Nayanar of the same name mentioned by Sundaramurti. During the days of Peyāḻvār, Tiruvallikēni was perhaps without any temple-structure, though it had attained sacredness as a Vishnu shrine. One of the Guruparamparais says that Tirumangai lived for 105 years. He must have been a long-lived person to induce this belief and we may assume that he died at about his 70th year. Taking all these into consideration, we may be justified in concluding that he lived between A.D. 800 and 870.

Literary and linguistic evidences support the above conclusion fully. References to *Kuṟaḷ* (A.D. 600) occur here and there in

[1] I. M. P. Ms. 326.

Tirumangai's poems.[1] A stanza in *Nāladiyār* (A.D. 680) is referred to in *Siriya-tirumadal.*[2] A number of proverbs in *Palamoli* A.D. 725 are used here and there.[3] Vāsavadatta's story in Perungadai (c. A.D. 700) is in *Siriya--tirumadal* (couplet 65). The type of poem named Sappāni (I, 6) is very similar both in Periyālvār (C.A.D. 850) and in Tirumangai (X, 5) one line actually occurring in both; so also *Asodai tan singam* of Tirumangai *(Periya- tirumoli* VI, 8, 6) and Aśodai-yiḷam-singam *(Tirup-pāvai, 1)* of Āṇḍāl (c. 850) are similar. There are some similarities between Tirumangai and Māṇikkavāsagar. For instance Kot-tumbi occurs in both.[4] 'Achcho' occurs in Periyālvar, Tirumangai and Māṇikkavāsagar. Tirumangai has also introduced some new types of poems such as Kulamanituram, Pongattam pongo, molai, tokkai, tara, parakkalital, mochchu, ullal.

It has been already noted that Tirumangai was a very learned poet. He had made use of the hymns of Sambandar, Appar and Sundarar. The type of composition, Tiru-nedun-dāndakam is evidence enough. Phrases and expressions of these saints are also found in Tirumangai's poems.

He is considered by the Vaishnavities themselves as a controversialist-poet and there is a tradition which says that he worsted Sambandar in a poetic contest. The tradition has no foundation in fact.[5]

The next and last of the Āḷvārs mentioned in *Ramānujanūrrandādi* is Sadagopa (Skt. Sathakopa), better known as Nammāḷvār. He is considered the greatest of the Alvars and was certainly most philosophical among them. With him the *bhakti* movement reaches its culmination and a disciple of his, Madhurakavi by name, composed a decad in honour of his *guru* and ended the long line of Vaishnava Saints. This Madhurakavi is also counted as an Alvar.

[1] Kural 1137, Peria-tirumadal, couplet 39.

[2] St. 114=couplet 4.

[3] st. 223=Periya-tirumoli XI, 8, 6; at. 358=VII, 10, 4; st. 252=X, 9, 8; 253=XI, 8, 3; 370=Siriya Tirumadal couplet 3.

[4] Periyā-Tirumoli V III, 4=Tiruvasagam.

[5] Alvargal Kala-nilai, p. 137.

Nammāḷvār is the author of four poems, *viz.*, Tiruviruttam (100 stanzas in Kalitturai metre), *Pēriya-Tiruyandādi* (87 stanzas in Veṇbā metre), *Tiruvāśiriyam* (seven stanzas in *āsiriya* metre) and *Tiruvāimoḷi* (1,000 stanzas divided into ten sections, each section containing ten tens). The stanzas in each of these four poems are in *antādi* arrangement.

The *Guruparampari* says that Tiruvaḷudi-vaḷanādar, the seventh ancestor of Nammālvār in his father's line obtained his son on his reciting *Tiruppāvai* for a year. It is also said that our Alvar lived for 35 years and taught in his *archāvatāra* the whole *Nalāyira-Divya-Prabandha* to Nāthamuni, the first of the Āchāryās. This Āchāryā was born at Vīra-nārāyanapuram and died at Gangaikonda-Cholapuram. These statements of Guruparamparai give us some indication of the date of Nāthamuni and therefore of Nammāḷvār. Vira-narayaṇa was the surname of Parantaka I (A.D. 907-953) and Gangaikonda-chola, of Rajendra-chola (1012-1044). So Nāthamuni's date might be from A.D. 910-990. He is said to have lived for 330 years on account of his yogic powers. Probably he was taught Nālayiram about A.D. 935. If we assign Nammāḷvār to the last quarter of the ninth century, the data noticed so far will be covered. A certain Srinatha is mentioned in the Anbil plates[1] and he might very well be Acharya Nāthamuni especially because his age, according to this record would be the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century A.D.

The date suggested for Nammāḷvār receives full corroboration from his poems themselves. Of the shrines he has sung, two are of utmost importance in this connection. One is Varaguṇamangai or Varaguṇamangalam, named after the Pandya king Varaguṇa. There are only two Varaguṇas known to history, the earlier of whom reigned from about A.D. 780 to 820. Another shrine is Srivaramangalam or Vanamamali, and this came into existence in the reign of the Pandya king Kōmārañjaḍaiyan under the circumstances set forth in the following extracts from a copper-plate grant of that king. 'While the seventeenth year of the reign of Neḍunjaḍaiyan, the most devoted follower of Vishnu, was current, he gave with libations

[1] EL. XV, p. 54.

of water the village of Velangudi in Tenkalavaḻināḍu, having cancelled its former name–and having bestowed on it the new name of Srivaramangalam to Sujjata Bhatta. Kōmārañjaḍaiyan is now identified with Varaguna I and the grant must have been made towards the end of the eighth century. This shows clearly that Nammāḻvār must be ascribed to a date later than A.D. 800.

There are some linguistic evidences which indicate that Nammaḻvār is later than Periyālvār, Andaḷ and Tirumangai.[1] So Nammāḻvār must have lived later than A.D. 870.

This is made more than probable by another consideration. A rare proverb occurs both in Māṇikkavāsagar's *Tiruvāsagam* (91) and in Nammāḻvār's *Tiruviruttam* (94), and the mode of citation in the latter poem makes it highly probable that this poem has taken it from somewhere else. It may be noted that there are very many similarities between the *Tiruvāymoḻi* and the *Tiruvāsagam.*[2] Even the names are highly suggestive both being identical in senses. *Tiruviruttam* corresponds to *Tirukkōvaiyar.* Rare expressions like val-mutal occur in both. Kil originally an infix added to verbal roots and to infinitive forms of verbs to denote ability, was later used by some poets as an independent verbal root with finite forms of its own. Such finite forms are found both in *Tiruvāsagam* and *Tiruvāymoḻi*[3] Tirumangai uses a very rare form, Kirkinṟilēn.[4] Finally parallels in sentiments and ideas are found in plenty. Hence we would be perfectly justified if we place Nammāḻvār a little than Māṇikkavāsagar, that is later than A.D. 875.

[1] Community of words and expressions are strong pieces of evidence and I shall mention only a few of these. Arkkidukopuśal-ini occurs with a slight variation in Nāchchiyar Tirumoḻi (IX, 2) and in Tiruvaymoḻi (VIII, 2, 6). Sakkarac-celvan occurs both in Tirumangai (Tirumoli V. 9, 5) and in Nammalvar (Tiruvaymoli VII, 7, 10). So also Pirākkaḷ (Tirumoli X, 5, 2=Tiruvay. III, 7, 5), and Koyinmai (Periya Tirumoḻi VIII, 2, 8=Tiruvay VI, 2, 6) More than all these, the verbal termination ' kinru ' functioning as an adverb (*e.g.* vakukkinru, Tiruvay, 1, 4, 9) occur eight times in Tiruvāymoḻi, but only once in Tirumangai's poems (Periya Tirumaḍal, 92). Incidentally, one other peculiarity may be noted. The negative form of verb nillā take, in future tense nillappai, in the second person singular and similar forms are used in as many as four places. Of course, the personal termination changing to accord with the person and the number. Periya Tiruvandadi 23, 60, 83. See M. Raghava Iyengar's Araychchi-tokudi pp. 304-308.

[2] Tiruvas. 143, 144=Tiruvay. II, 3, 5; Pollamani, Tiruvas. 438=Tiruvay. V, 1, 2.

[3] Tiruvas 37, 45=Tiruvay. III, 2, 6.

[4] Periya Tirumoli I, 9, 5.

In an inscription at Ukkal, of the 13th year of Rajaraja the great (*i.e.* A.D. 998), the deity of the place is called Tiruvaymolideva and another inscription of the same king (16th year, *i.e.* A.D. 1001) at Vijayanārayanam refers to the temple of Saṭhakopa-Vinnagara-perumanadi in the village.[1] *Tiruvāymoli* is the name of the most important of Nammāḷvār's poems and Saṭhakopa is a surname of the Alvar himself. Allowing even a century for the fame of this Alvar to spread and for his pre-eminent position among the Alvars to be recognised, the last quarter of the ninth century would be the most probable date for this Alvar.

The spiritual wisdom enshrined in the poems of this, the greatest of the Alvars, has rightly earned for him an exalted position similar to that of Māṇikkavāsagar. It has called forth several commentaries, the most elaborate and famous of them being the 'Īḍu' of Periyavāchchān Pillai. Successive generations of erudite scholars and specialists in the Vaishnavaite lore had engaged themselves in writing out the expositions as they heard them from their spiritual masters. But the credit of laying the foundation of this studpendous structure goes to Sri Nāthamuni who was the first of the Āchāryas. He collected all the poems included in the *Nalāyira Divya Prabandham,* classified them, and set them to tunes with the help of his two nephews. In this he did a service similar to that of Nambi-Āṇḍar-Nambi of the Saiva faith. The parallelism does not end here.

[1] K.A.N. Sastri, The colas I, pp. 493, 499.

CHAPTER V

SECULAR LITERATURE

Minor Prabandhas

Though the Bhakti cult was the main force which directed the current of literary activities in this period, there were other and more ancient forces which could not be entirely suppressed. The latter helped to relieve the monotony and give us a glimpse of the political life in the country. We learn, for instance, that, even during the first onset of religious enthusiasm, Neḍumāṟan, the Pandya contemporary of Sambandar was glorified in a poetic compostion, known now as *Pāṇḍikkōvai.* This name is found in the commentaries of *Kaḷaviayaṟ-Kārigai* and *Ilakkaṇaviḷakkam* a late grammatical work of the seventeenth century. The *Pāndikkōvai* as a whole has been lost, though a substantial portion of it [as many as 353 stanzas] is found embodied in the commentaries on *Iraiyanār Ahapporuḷ* and *Kalaviyaṟ-Kārigai* (Ed. 1931). About twenty battle-fields are mentioned in the poem and one may legitimately doubt whether the engagements in all these relate to one and the same king. It may be noted that some of the battle-fields such as Nelvēli, Sennilam, etc., are referred to in the Veḷvikuḍi grants and the Sinnamanūr plates. Some of the titles of the hero or heroes of the poem are Arıkēsari, Parankusan, Adisayan, Raṇāntakan, Ranōdayan, Uchitan, Sembiyan Māṟan, Neḍumāṟan, Pūḻiyan, Mummadil Vēndan, Vānavan Sembiyan, Vāṇavan Māṟan, Varōdayan, Vichāritan and Vijaya-caritan. Perhaps the work is a Kōvai prabandha on some of the early Pandyas of the Hymnal period. The date of the work may be about A.D. 700. There were other Kōvais also, such as the *Muttaraiyar Kovai* (Yap Comm. Sutra 95 P. 400, composed a little later.

The lengthy and highly schematic form of the Kovai must have palled on the ears of the Tamils. Its unrelieved metrical monotony must have been wearisome to the utmost. Hence a new type of poem, *Kalambagam*, cane into vogue. It admitted variety both in metre and in substance. *Nandikkalambagam* is one of the earliest of this kind. The edition of the work published by the Madurai Tamil Sangam contains many interpolated stanzas and its editor has taken care to note this fact. Perhaps the original work contained only ninety stanzas, in accordance with the rules of Pāṭṭiyal. The hero of the poem was Nandipottariyan (Nandi Varman III) of Pallava dynasty, the victor of Teḷḷāru. Since this Nandi ruled from A.D. 826 to 849. The Kalambagam would have to be assigned to the first half of the ninth century. *Tirukkalambagam,* a Jaina work by Udīchi-devar belongs perhaps to the same century.

The above types of prabandhas contained matter which was not quite germane to the subject of the poem. By virtue of necessity they had to deal with several extraneous matter. The kings whom the poems tried to please were too busy with state affairs and all that they required was plain unvarnished statements of their exploits, of course flattering to them to the memory of their ancestors. To serve this purpose Meykkīrtti compositions came into vogue and they began to be inscribed on stones and copper plates. The Pāṭṭiyal works like *Panniru-pāṭṭiyal* describe their characteristics. Perhaps the earliest of such inscriptions belongs to the reign of the Chola king Parantaka I (907-955).

Besides the works mentioned above there were other types of prabandhas also, described in the Pāṭṭiyal works. Pillai Tamil, Andadi, etc. may be specially noted.

Another work of great poetic merit, the *Muttoḷḷāyiram* must also be ascribed to the last quarter of the ninth century. A reference in the commentary of *Ilakkaṇa-viḷakkam* (pāṭṭiyal s. 88) says that this work consists of less than a thousand stanzas; and so the number of stanzas in this work was 900 and not 2,700 as generally believed. Most probably each of the Tamil kings, Chera, Chola and Pandya was sung in 300 stanzas. Perāsiriyar mentions this as a *virundu* (Seyyul 239) and the same commentator says that several stanzas of the work relate

to Kaikkiḷai or onesided love. The work consisted mostly of *Veṇbā* quatrains; but some stanzas contained as many as six lines. Some of the most exquisite love-lyrics in Tamil are found in this classic and the *Puṟattiraṭṭu* contains 65 stanzas of this kind, besides 44 stanzas treating of other themes such as the three capital cities, the territory of the enemies, battle-field etc.[1] The author was a Saivaite; but nothing else is known of him. Some scholars *(e.g.,* M. Raghava Iyengar) are of opinion that the illustrative stanzas of *Puṟapporuḷ-Venbāmalai* may have belonged to *Muttoḷḷāiyiram.* The *Paḻamoḻi* stanzas are freely *drawn upon by its author.*[2]

Kavyas

The absolutely secular nature which characterised literature of the Sangam age began to assume as we saw an ethical aspect with the appearance of the great *Kuṟal.* People were struck with admiration for the ideals set before them; but something more was needed to catch their imagination. National epics supplied this need. The *Mahabharatam* and *Ramayanam* were first popularised in the Tamil country by translations and the followers of the Vedic religion were satisfied by such efforts for a time. The Jains tried to gain the allegiance of the people by writing stories about royal personages who figured largely in the history of their religion and culture and about their saints and other great men. Being literary craftsmen of a higher type, they produced works of great literary importance in Tamil. We shall consider these works now.

The Jains first directed their efforts to adapting in Tamil famous works in Sanskrit which were very widely read and appreciated. The *Brihat-kathā* drew their attention. Indian literary tradition attributes this work to Guṇāḍhya who, it is said, wrote it in Paisachi language. It is not extant now. But it was perhaps first translated into Sanskrit by the Ganga king Durvinīta, a Jain, towards the end of the sixth century A.D., though some scholars doubt this.[3] The Tamil version known as *Peruṅgadai*

[1] Purat. 1, 464, l, 465

[2] Purat. 1, 506.

[3] Keith: History of Sanskrit literature, P. 268, f. n. 2.

is the work of a certain Konguvēḷ and most probably it followed the Śanskrit version. In Guṇāḍhya's work Naravāhana Dutta is the hero; but in the Tamil *Perungadai,* Udayana is the hero. It has adopted the *Kuṟaḷ* couplets in a few places[1]; and *Nālaḍiyār* stanzas in others[2]. It Uses ' nān ' for the first person singular[3], 'kinṟu ' the adverbial form and the vocative suffix ē in *uyrtiṇai,*[4] all late developments. Since *Nāladi* was collected somewhere about A.D. 700, Konguvēḷ's work could hardly be earlier than A.D. 750. The linguistic peculiarities noted above support this date.

Perungadai

The *Perungadai* is composed in Ahaval metre, the nearest equivalent being the well-known blank verse in English. We may guess that it consisted of about 150 sections or *gāthas,* each section ending in ' en ' and following the *antādi* order. It is a pity that only a fragment of this great work has survived. This fragment consists of five Kāṇḍas, but several sections of the last are missing. About 100 sections or *gāthas* are available. Virtually the whole of Udayanan's story is covered and the narration goes up to Naravāhanadattā's marriage with Madana-manjikai and the separation of the latter. How effectively and delightfully the *ahaval* metre can be employed in narration is well illustrated by this work. The monotony is relieved by various devices, and our interest in the story never slackens. The author has great poetic powers and his command of language is far above that of any other poet known till then. The sweet diction, the liqüidness of his style and the magnificient flow which is sustained throughout place him in the front rank among Tamil poets.

Like *Peruṇgadai,* another work also was written with *Brīhatkathā* as its basis. This was *Vāsudevanār sindam* mentioned in the commentary of *Yāpparungalam* (Sutra 95 P. 286). It was a Jaina work, and there is a Prakrit work *Vasudeva-hindi* by name which deals with the story of Guṇāḍhya's reputed work.[5]

[1] V, 7, 148-9=Kural, 783; I, 35, 234-5=Kural 969.
[2] I, 35, 156-8=Naladi, 370; II, 7, 74-5=Naladi. 384
[3] III, 27, 116.
[4] IV, 7, 70. I, 36, 150.
[5] K.M. Munshi: *Gujarat and its literature,* p. 23 also P.E.N, April, 1949. Dr. R. Vijayalakshmi, in "A study of the Perunkatai" [IITS-1981] says: "The Vasudevahindi deals

The Buddhists also did not lag behind the Jains in writing narrative poems in Tamil. But they concerned themselves with the life of the Buddha and with the Buddhist legends. There was a *Vimbasara Katha* from which a few lines are cited in the commentary of *Nilakēśi*, a late Jain work. Bimbisara (B.C. 543-491) was a king of Magadha and contemporary of Gautama Buddha. The lines cited refer to the birth of Buddha. Nothing else is known of this work.

Silappadikaram and Manimekalai

Literary works like *Perungadai*, *Vasudevanār Sindam*, *Vimbasara katha* deal with romantic tales and historical incidents which were of North Indian origin. Soon following them, efforts were made to utilise stories and incidents of the Tamil land for composing *Kāvyas*. Probably *Silappadikāram* was the first of them. Kaṇṇagi, the heroine of the poem, was married to Kōvalan, both belonging to a rich merchant class of Kaverippūmpaṭṭīnam in the chola country. But soon Kovalan deserted his wife in favour of Madhavi who was like Vasanthasena of Mṛichchakatika, a virtuous courtesan of the city. He spent all his wealth on his mistress and being reduced to poverty came home to his wife in a repentant attitude. Both the husband and the loyal wife left for Madurai in the Pandya country, there to repair their fortune. Leaving his wife under the protection of Madari, a shepherdess, in the outskirts of Madurai, Kovalan went into the city for selling one of his wife's anklets (silambu). The goldsmith of the royal household to whom the queen's pearl-anklet had been entrusted for repair met Kovalan and with the intention of appropriating the ornament in his custody, accused him of theft. The king, without investigation, ordered capital punishment and Kovalan was unjustly killed. Having come to know of this, Kannagi went into the royal presence, accused the king of injustice and proved the innocence of her husband by breaking her anklet of rubies and showing its contents. The king died broken-hearted at the enormity of his injustice and the queen also followed her lord. Kannagi's

with the exploits of Vasudevā, the father of Krishna and ascribes to him some of the adventures of Naravāhavadattā... As such, this work also could not have been the source of Perunkatai" [P.P. 29-30]. As regards the Sanskrit source, she says, "while this appears probable, it has to remain as a conjecture in the absence of additional supporting evidence" (P.36) [Editor]

rage was not appeased. She tore off her breast, flung it at the city of Madurai and the city was destroyed in flames. Then she left the city for Sengunrur in the Chera country. The king of this country heard of her presence and transmission to heaven with her husband, from his tribesmen and a poet Sāttanār who happened to be there in the company of Iḷangō, the King's younger brother, proclaimed himself an eye-witness of Kannagi's deeds, narrated all the detail and wound up saying that everything was the result of Karma. Requested to explain himself, the poet gave the history of the persons in their past birth, as revealed to the heroine by the guardian deity of Madurai and heard by himself while resting at night in the Velliyambalam. King Cheran Senguṭṭuvan on hearing the story desired to perpetuate the memory of Kannagi. With this object in view, he went north to the Himalayas, defeating on his way several Aryan kings, brought a stone consecrating it by bathing it in the waters of the Ganges, sculptured an idol of Kannagi, finished the shrine and inaugurated Kannagi worship in the land. At the worship, several kings were present–the Aryan kings brought captive from the northern expedition and now released, kings already in prison, Kongu princes of the west, Malava kings, and King Gajabahu of the sea-girt Ceylon. These kings prayed that Kannagi might be pleased to grace their celebrations of her with her presence. She granted the prayer in an aerial voice. Then Senguttuvan sat in state in a decorated pavilion, with his brother, the poet. The divine Kannagi entered the spirit of her brahmin friend Devantikai and explained the reason why the poet had turned an ascetic. In the end the poet exhorts all those who heard his narration to lead a virtuous life in this world and secure what would be a help in the world to come.

The poem consists of three *Kāṇḍas,* viz., Puhārk-kāṇḍam, Maduraik-kaṇdam and Vanjik-kāṇḍam. The first two *kāṇḍas* deal with the life of Kannagi in her mundane existence and the last, with her as a deity in a shrine.

We may also state here that Kōvalan had a daughter named Maṇimēkalai by his courtesan-wife Madhavi. Her life-history as a Buddhist nun is narrated by Śāttanar, the companion of Iḷangō, in a separate *Kāvya,* well-known as the *Manimēkalai.* This poet was first asked to enshrine the life history of Kannagi in a narrative poem; but he excused himself and said that

Ilango is better fitted for the task. Accordingly Ilango composed the poem and named it *Śilappadikāram* after the ' Silambu ' which establishes the justice of Kannagi's case. The two narrative poems, *Silappadikāram* and *Manimēkalai* are called by some the ' twin epics ', though they do not exhibit any of the characteristics of epic poetry.

Senguttuvan was a king of renown in the Sangam Period and his exploits form the subject-matter of the 5th decad of *Padirrupattu* and of two other stanzas, one in *Aham* (212) and another in *Puram* (369)–all by Paranar. ' Ilango ' does not occur among the Sangam poets, but ' Sāttanar ' does. Gajabāhu of Ceylon is also a well-known king and, more than that, he furnishes a clue as to the date of Senguttuvan and of the Sangam period in general. Basing his conclusions on this synchronism, Kanakasabhai fixed the Sangam Age as the 2nd century A.D. and actually drew a picture of the Tamil civilisation and culture during the Sangam Age in his book ' *The Tamils Eighteen hundred years Ago* '. Seeing the many historical difficulties in accepting this position. M. Raghava Aiyangar brings the Sangam age itself down to the fifth century A.D. (vide Cheran Senguttuvan, I edn.)

The most important fact we must bear in mind is that Śilapadikāram is essentially a story. It is not a history treating of actual events. Most of the chapters of the work are called ' *Kādai*' by the author and the commentaries explain this term as meaning ' that which contains a story of ' *Kathā* '. The story has been till within recent times developing, gathering and adding new materials to itself to suit the varied tastes and fashions of the Tamils at different periods. A popular ballad *Kovalan Kadai* even now read or recited with great relish in rural parts, contains many elements not found in Silappadikaram. In this Kavya, a story from even Panchatantra is given and Kovalan is said to have a part in it.[1] Surely this is proof enough of the purely imaginative character of the work. It is full of miraculous elements; a wicked person who pokes fun at Kovalan and Kannagi and makes indelicate suggestions is cursed by a Jaina nun and he becomes at once a jackal and cried for mercy;

[1] Ch. 15, II, pp. 54-74.

the Sun-god prophesies that Madurai would be consumed by fire; Kovalan after his death revives at the touch of Kannagi and speaks to her. Such things clearly show that the poet does not distinguish between fact, fiction, marvel and miracle. Supernaturalism was the very atmosphere in which he lived and his religion which was Jainism brought him up in that element. We must be very cautious in drawing any historical conclusion from any statement of his. We must seek corroboration from a reliable source for everthing that has the seeming appearance of a historical fact. Fortunately we have a trustworthy work which ought to satisfy us in this respect. It is the *Padirruppattu* whose decads are contemporaneous with the kings they celebrate. The *Maṇimēkalai,* which is contemporaneous with the *Silappadikāram* itself is helpful in a different way.

Let us consider some of the main statements which have a historical verisimilitude. It is said that Ilango the author of the *Silappadikāram* was the younger brother of Cheran Senguttuvan. Not even the Manimekalai corroborates this statement. *Padirruppattu* as we have seen does not also support this and differs in many other ways from the narrative of the *Śilappadikāram.* The most important statement from a historical standpoint that Gajabāhu of Ceylon was present at Senguttuvan's court stands singularly uncorroborated. *Śilappadikāram* itself contradicts this in its Urai-peru-Katturai. The 5th decad of *Padirruppattu* does not say anything either of Ceylon or Gajabāhu. In fact no reference at all to Ceylon and its kings occurs in the whole of *Padirruppattu.* The *Manimēkalai* also though it mentions Senguttuvan and his consecration of Kannagi's temple at his capital is silent about Gajabahu. Finally the *Mahāvamsa* does not say anything either about the King's attendance during the consecrating ceremony at the Chera capital or about his introducing Kannagi worship in his own country.[1] Paranar who is the author of 65 poems, besides the decad on Senguttuvan in *Padirruppattu* and who is one of the most allusive of Sangam poets has in all these 65 poems, not a word to say either about Senguttuvan installing Kannagi as deity or about Ilango being Senguttuvan's brother or about Gajabāhu.

It is only *Rajāvali,* a late chronicle of the sixteenth century that connects Kannagi worship with Gajabābu and this is not of any historical value and cannot be relied on.

If Ilango's relationship with Senguttuvan were true, it would mean that he was a poet of the early Sangam period. He has not contributed even a single stanza to any of the existing anthologies of the period. He does not show personal aquaintance with any poet except Sāttanār, nor do the other poets of the period know even of the existence of such a poet as Iḷangō. The author of the *Maṇimēkalai* was no doubt a Sāttanār. But he was not the same as the Sangam poet Sīttalai Sāttanār. The latter lived during the time of Chittira-mādat-tuñjiya Nanmāṟan and has sung about him (*Puram* 59). The former was a contemporary of Arasu-kaṭṭilil-tunjiya Neduñjeḻiyan, for it was this king who, according to *Silappadikāram* ordered the execution of Kovalan. No poet of the Sangam period has sung about this Neduñjeḻiyan and he is most probably a fictitious person. Sattanar of the Maṇimēkalai was a deeply religious Buddhist and secular poetry could not have attracted him. On the other hand Sīttalai-Sattanar was the author of ten secular poems, nine on love and one on Nanmaran already referred to.[1] Neither in the *Silappadikāram* nor in the *Maṇimēkalai* is found the adjunct ' Sīttalai ' which is crucial. The diction and style of the two poets are so entirely different that it is impossible that they could be identical.[2] The whole course of the development of the Tamil language is against such identification. To hold, on this basis, that Ilangō was a Sangam poet is absolutely unsustainable.

We may now consider the chief characters of the poem Kovalan and Kannagi. In the *Maṇimēkalai* which is, according to the commentator Adiyārkkunallār, earlier than Silappadikaram, it is said that Kovalan was ninth in descent from his ancestor, another Kovalan, and that this ancestor was a friend of Imaiyavaramban Neduñ-jēralādan.[3] From *Padiṟṟuppattu* we know that Chēralādan was the father of Senguṭṭuvan. If the former statement was correct, then it would follow that Kovalan, Kannagi's husband, was removed from Senguttuvan by eight generations. In another context *Maṇimēkalai* makes Kovalan and Kannagi

[1] *Aham* 53, 134, 229, 306, 320; *Kuṟum.* 154; *Naṟṟiṇai,* 36, 127, 339; *Puṟam.* 59

[2] Even words like *anda (27, 85), inda (22, 155), appadi (29, 400), ippadi (29, 469)*; tense infixes like *kiṟu (29, 125), kinṟu (29, 294)* and *āninṟu (29, 405)* occur in the *Maṇimēkalai.*

[3] XXVIII, 103, 123

anterior even to the Buddha by several generations.[1] Kannagi as deity informs Manimekalai that to expiate her sin of destroying Madurai, she and Kovalan would be undergoing births and deaths for generations together in this world.[2] and at long last they would hear the dharmic word from the mouth of Buddha himself and then they would get the final release. These statements clearly show that Kannagi and Kovalan are not historic figures.

The fictitious nature of these characters is apparent also from another reference in *Naṟṟinai* (216). The passage is obscure; but there is in it a clear reference to Tirumāvuṇṇi who tore off one of her breasts. We might well doubt if it is a reference to Kannagi; but if it is, her story is more ancient than the Sangam period and must have differed materially from the *Silappadikāram's* version. We hear in Buddhist *Divyavadana* and *Jatakamala,* stories in which tearing off of breasts occur.[3] And we might easily infer that the story was originally of Buddhist origin. Sattanar has given us the Buddhist version of the sequel to Kannagi's story; but it was Iḷangō-aḍigaḷ who with his genius turned this into a story of remarkable power and beauty, tense with dramatic situations. He adds Jainistic and Hindu elements to the original story and he shows equal reverence to the Buddha and his religion. It is idle to expect historicity in tales like the *Maṇimēkalai* and the *Silappadikāram* where witch-craft, birth-stories relating the action of past, of Karma in determining present life, stories of the gods and minor spirits mingle freely in ordinary life, curses taking effect immediately and transforming people into all sorts of animals, and spirits of dead people visiting men and women in ordinary life and relating to them events long past and predicting the future. In such tales, the love of the marvellous is fully satisfied by tales of adventure at sea with shipwrecks and strange rescues, of wanderings on land to strange places like camphor-land and of travelling through air by means of *mantrās*. But regard for reality has never been the aim of these authors.

[1] XXVIII, 141-146

[2] Such stories of births, deaths and final release occur frequently in Buddhist literature. Winternitz, H.I.L., II. p. 161.

[3] Winternitz, H.I.L., II, p. 290.

So much about the historicity of the personages and events referred to in the two narrative poems. We shall now consider their date. As already noted, the *Śilappadikāram* was the later of the two. It is not a work of the Sangam age. Nowhere in the whole of the Sangam literature is anything mentioned about the Pattini worship, *i.e.*, the worship of Kannagi as a deity, which was unknown in ancient Tamiḻagam. In the *Silapadikāram*, when the Pandya king and his consort fell down dead, Kannagi praising the country of her birth, as having produced women of exemplary virtue (Canto 21) makes a vow that, if she is in truth a chaste wife, she would destroy the city of Madurai along with its king. In quite angry tones, she enumerates six of the above paragons of virtue and none of them is known to Sangam literature.[1] A few countries like Karnataka and Bengal XXV, 156-7) which were unknown to the Tamils of the Sangam period are mentioned. Some sacred places like Srīrangam and Vēngaḍam are mentioned in *Silappadikāram* (XI, 35-51) and these attained religious importance only in later times. Sangam literature knows Vēngaḍam only as the hill which bounded the Tamil country on the north, and no religious importance was attached to it in ancient times. Religion also has advanced a great deal in the twin Kavyas from what we find in the Sangam literature. For instance the *panchākshara and the ashṭākshara* and the ninety-six kinds of Pāshaṇḍas are referred to in *Silappadikāram*. Kāvirippūmpattinam is described in *Paṭṭinappālai,* a Sangam work, as well as in the *Kāvyas*. The latter description shows great development in the city. The name Kaviri itself, has during the time of *Silappadikāram* begun to be pronounced Kāvēri, and a puranic derivation making the river the daughter of the sage Kavera, has been found for it in the *Māṇimēkalai* so also the pattinam has acquired a new name Kākandi on the basis of a puranic story. As alrēady noted, the birth-stories of several people which abound in both the *Kāvyas* clearly indicate a later date than the Sangam period where this feature is entirely absent. The social life and habits as portrayed in these works point to a later age. For instance compare Kannagi's marriage with the marriage described in *Aham* 86, 136 and

[1] Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer who edited this work has in a footnote identified Karikāl Vaḷavan makaḷ with Ādimandi and Vanjikkoñ with Āṭṭan Atti (canto XXI, I, II). There is no justification for this. Ādimandi's story occurs in Paranar's poems [*Aham* 45, 76, 222, 236, 376 and 396, and *Kuṟundogai* (31) is by Ādimandi herself] Both are dancers.

221.[1] The reference to *kūttach-chākkiyar*[2] and to *talaikkōl*[3] show a later stage than the simple dancing of *kūttar* and *viralis* of the Sangam period. The many passages of Sangam works which have found place in *Silappadikāram* show no doubt the vast scholarship of Iḷangō, but at the same time show also that he was definitely a later poet.[4]

Linguistic evidence also supports a later date. A number of words that became current in the language about the eighth century and later are found in *Silappadikāram.*[5]

The metrical varieties that we meet with in the *Silappadikāram* are a further proof of the lateness of the work. Such varieties are not found in the Sangam classics. The development of *vari-pāṭṭu* in all its varieties is a unique feature of this *kāvya,* which is also a sign of its lateness.

Above all, the literary evidences clinch the matter finally and once for all. The whole of the third canto of *Silappadikāram* is based on *Bharata Nātya Sastram.* A story from the *Panchatantra* is given in canto 15 (11. 54-74) and the well-known *sloka* beginning with ' aparikshya na kartavyam ' is actually indicated. This means that the *kāvya* is later than A.D. 500.[6] Besides these, a number of later works in Sanskrit though their dates are not definitely ascertained, have been made use of or referred to by Iḷangō. They are *Mayamata,*[7] treatises like *Ratna-pariksha,*[8]

[1] Marriage in ancient Tamil aham: Dinamani Kadir dated 3-8-1950.
[2] Silap., XXVIII. 77.
[3] III, 120.
[4] See also *Kaviya Period in Tamil Literature.*
[5] A few instances may be noted. *śillai* ch. 16, 1. 147=Naladi (377), *ammāmi* (29, 5) *māmi* (29, 8), *nāttūṉ* (16, 1. 19), *tambi (c. 17.* padarkkai-pparaval, 1). *kaḍai* in the sense of shop (6, 1. 139). Here are a few word forms that came into use slightly earlier: *nān* (c. 29, Kannagikurru, etc.), *inda* (21, 1. 51), *un* (23, 29), *pinnai* (13, 136), allal (14, 1. 44), uṇḍēl (14, 57). The tense infixes like 'Kinṟu', (14,125) are also features that came into use in later times. The frequent use of the expletive 'tan' and 'tam' in their several cases to indicate the inflexion of the main words is also another characteristic of later times. For instances see my 'Kavya Period in Tamil Literature'. The use of Sanskrit words and compounds in greater numbers (*c.* 10, 11: 180-187) and of foreign words like *surungai* (*c.* 14, 1. 65) may also be specially noted. Of the latter words which is of Greek origin Keith observes 'probably later India borrowed *surunga* from syrinx in the technical sense of an underground passage'. *History of Sanskrit Literature,* p. 25.

[6] Keith, p. 262.
[7] 1. 97 comm.
[8] 14, 180-200.

treatise on the art of thieving by *Karṇīsuta,* Ayurvedic treatises, and treatises on dreams and auguries. It may be noted that Apahāravarman of Dandin's *Daśakumāra-charita* follows the rules laid down by *Karṇīsuta.* The knowledge of astronomy and astrology which the author of *Silappadikāram* displays as in canto 26 (25-26) is noteworthy. He mentions the twelve *rāśis,* the positions of grihas and the five elements known as *panchanga.* He also refers (canto 23, 11. 133-137) to the eighth *tithi* and *Friday* of the week (veḷḷi-vāram). This is very important for our purpose, more of this later. The *Maṇimēkalai* in its 29th canto follows Diṅnāga's *Nyāyapravēśa* which proves that this kavya as also its companion is later than the fifth century A.D.

Turning now to Tamil works which were utilised by Iḷangō, we are able to get a more definite idea about his date. I pass over his indebtedness to *Padirṟuppattu*[1]and *Tolkāppiyam.*[2] A famous couplet from the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* (55) is found used both in the *Maṇimēkalai*[3] and in the *Silappadikāram.*[4] In the former, the author of the *Kuṟaḷ* is referred to as the poet who never utters (lit. is without) an untruth. *Nānmaṇikkaḍigai* (84) is the source of the first *veṇbā* at the end of canto 20 of *Silappadikāram. Paḻamoḻi* (46) is the source of canto 21, 11. 3-4 of the *Silappadikāram.* These two works are assignable to the latter half of the eighth century.

It is well known that *Udayanan Perungadai* is one of the works which Ilango has utilised in his *Silappadikāram.* The commentator Adiyārkunallār strongly suggests this in his *uraippāyiram* and there are several parallel passages in support of this.[5]. We have seen that the *Perungadai* was composed about

[1] 88=Silap. 28, II. 135-149.

[2] Purat. 65, 77=Silap. 25, II. 131-145.

[3] 22, II. 59-61.

[4] 23, final *venbā.*

[5] Perun. I, 35, 219= Silap. (3, 168; Perun. I 36, 266=Silap. 5.137; Perun.) II 5, 5=Silap. 5, 157.

A.D. 750. *Aranerichchāram* and *Ācharakkōvai* are two other works which have been laid under contribution by *Iḷaṅgō,*[1] These two works as already stated are assignable to the first quarter of the ninth century. Hence *Silappadikāram* must be assigned to a date later than 825 A.D.

The *Manimēkalai* is the earlier of the two *kāvyas,* Adiyārkkunallār specifically mentions this fact at the end of his *uraippāyiram*. In adjuncts of several proper and common names, descriptions in several places, in words, and in ideas there is considerable agreement between the two works.[2] There is no doubt that Iḷangō had the text of *Maṇimēkalai* in his mind while composing his great work. Now most of the arguments above set forth will apply equally to this Buddhist *kāvya,*[3] for which the first quarter of the ninth century may be considered a suitable date. It follows that the *Silappadikāram* was most probably composed about the middle of the ninth century A.D.

The late Mr. L.D. Swamikkannu Pillai gathered together all the astronomical data relating to the time when Kovalan and Kannagi left Kavirippumpattinam for Madurai and to the time when the city,[4] according to the prophesy, would have been consumed by fire,[5] and came to the conclusion that A.D. 756 was the one year which would satisfy all data.[6] Nobody would take the burning of Madurai to be a historical fact. The astronomical conjunction must have been the result of backward calculation either by the poet or somebody who knew astronomy. So all that can be inferred from the astronomical result is that

[1] See *Ara.* 59=*Silap* 11, 11, 56=7; *Ara. 67=Silap.* 28, 11. 179-180. Acha. 64=*Silap. 21, 53-4; Acha.* 95=*Silap.* 16, e. 13.

[2] For instance compare *Manimēkalai,* canto 28, 11.31-50 with silap. canto 5,11. 22-48

[3] A few interesting points may be noted. The story of hunger-stricken Visvamitra trying to eat dog's flesh, mentioned in Manu is referred to in this Kavya also M. X, 108=Mani. 11, 84-87. Either Harsha's Nāgānandā (7th cent.) or Jataka No. 543 or Jātakatthavannana, (5th cent. A.D.) seems to have indicated in canto 11, 1. 70. About the indebtedness to Dignāga, the famous Buddhist logician. mention has already been made. An incident in Udayanan's story is referred to Mani. 17, II. 9-12 Nāladi and Palmoli are drawn upon. Pala. 246=Mani.: c. 13, 103; Pala 21=Mani. c. 4, II. 107-108; Nal. 285=Mani. C, II, 1176-71; Nal. 153=Mani 18, 3; Nal. 315=Mani c. 20, 50.

[4] 10. II 1-3

[5] 23. II. 133-7

[6] An Indian Ephemeris. Vol. I. pt. 1. app. iii.

Silappadikāram was composed later than A.D. 756. That the author has mentioned a week day has already been noted. With regard to this, the observations of A.B. Keith are relevent: We know that, according to Dio Cassius, the calendrical use of the names of the planets was regular in his time and in 321 A.D. Constantine gave the seven days' week its definite sanction by appointing Sunday as a day of rest........ It is supported to some extent by the fact that the first case of the use of a name of this kind in an inscription is in A.D. 484, after which it is still rare down to A.D. 800'.[1] This shows that the date we have arrived at is quite in consonance with our knowledge of the calendar as it was in the ninth century A.D.

There are two references in *Silappadikāram* which are of special interest in this connection. One is Toṇḍi[2] and the other is Pangalar.[3] Toṇḍi is said to be a port in the east and the kings of Chola branch of this place are said to have brought to Kudal, the Pandya capital, larger quantities of *agil,* silk, sandalwood, spices like musk *(kastūri)* and camphor *(Karpura)* as tributes in flotilla wafted ashore by the wind blowing from the east. This could not be the Toṇḍi of the Cheras in the west coast nor could it be the Toṇḍi of the Pāṇḍyās in the east coast, near Ramnad. If we may rely upon the statement of the poet as explained by the commentator, the reference must be to a Chola settlement in the Far East, and over this settlement, the Pandyas had perhaps some sort of suzerainty. There was some connection between the Pandyas and the Sailendras in the eighth century A.D.[4] This also supports the date we have indicated above. As regards ' Pangalar ' which means the people or the kings of Bengal, we may at once say that it is a late name. The ancient name of the country is Vanga. It is said to have derived its name from a prince of the *Mahābhāratā* to whose portion it fell on the partition of the Bharatavarsha among the princes of the Lunar race. But a city called Bangala, near Chittangong, which is now washed away appears to have been given the name Bangala. This word according to Encyclopaedia Britannica (S.V. Bengal) was first

[1] History of Sanskrit literature. p. 531.
[2] 14, II. 106-112.
[3] 25, I. 157.
[4] K.A.N. Sastri's History of Sri Vijaya, p. 47

used by the Mussalmans. The earliest use of ' Pangala ' in Tamil appears in a Tamil inscription and Tiruvalangadu plates of Rajendra Cholas (1012-1044 A.D.) Perhaps this late name found its first entry in Tamil about two centuries before. In *Yasaśtilaka Champu*[1] which was written in A.D. 959, the name Vangala occurs and this is perhaps the earliest reference to the country in classical Sanskrit literature. The name could not have come into vogue much earlier than this date.[2]

It remains now only to note the importance of this great classic in the history of Tamil poetry. This is the earliest extant work to employ *varip-pāṭṭu* in its composition. The nature of this stanza must be carefully distinguished from the hymnal stanzas of Nayanars and Alvars. The former might have for its subject-matter either a god or human being; it would generally consist of triatic quatrains eminently suitable for being sung to the accompaniment of *Viṇā* or other musical instrument and its emotional content would often require repetition of the second line. A special favourite of the Jains, it must have been a development from the hymnal pieces, eschewing monotony both in content and form. Elaborate treatises existed ōn this *varip-pāṭṭu*, and though it disappeared with the decline of Jain literature, its musical quality continued to pervade the *viruttam* metre which came into use about the time of the *Silāppadikāram.* Another new feature which the *Silāppadikāram* introduced and which unfortunately was not followed up in the *Kāvyas* of later times was the metrical variations to suit the ideas and situations portrayed. Take the very first canto (Mangala-vāḻttupāḍal) of the work. The variety and the artistic finish of the stanzas and the verses have set a very high standard for the poetic art. A third feature which is noteworthy is the mixed prose and verse found in several cantos, each supplementing the other. No earlier instance of this kind of composition is met with in Tamil literature, though Tolkāpiyar refers to this type.[3] About this type, Winternitz observes that it was ever a favourite method

[1] Book III, p. 431.

[2] K.K. Handiqui's Yasastilaka and Indian Culture, p.516 for a discussion of the views of various scholars on the periodigation of Sangam works and fixing Silappadikāram to 5th century A.D. Dr. K. Sivathambi's "Drama in Ancient Tamil Society," Chapter III sources. NCBH (P) Ltd. 1981. [Editor]

[3] Seyyul-iyal. st. 166.

in ancient India to enliven narrative prose by verses and to introduce or to garb narrative prose verses by explanatory prose passages.[1] The Buddhistic *Jātaka* tales among others adopted this type and the *Silappadikāram* also followed this ancient practice. A fourth feature which characterises the *Silappadikāram* is the dramatic presentation of the story sustained by dialogues of extraordinary quality. The author's genius is quite apparent here and it is only in Kamban that we again meet with a genius of surpassing merits. Yet another feature which is of special interest is the introduction of foreign matters such as the details of Natya Sastra in canto III into the very texture of the story. Several incidents and situations are merely opportunities for instruction. This feature is found in other literatures also. The Sanskrit romanticists are fond of displaying their specialistic knowledge of this kind. Though Iḷangōvaḍigal is open to a similar charge, we have reason to be grateful to him for imparting to us some knowledge of the twin arts, music and dancing of the ancient days.

The *Maṇimēkalại* from one point of view is of greater importance than the *Silappadikāram*, for it is the only Buddhist Kavya extant in Tamil literature. In this also, as in *Silappadikāram*, there are thirty *gathas* or sections. But the story which concerns the different lines of almost all the characters in it is too complicated to be summarised briefly.[2] It is said that *Manimekalai* would take several male births and ultimately become the first among the disciples of the Buddha before attaining nirvana (21, 175-179). From this we may infer that the story must be traced to an avatara about the past births of either Sariputta or Moggalana, who were the chief disciples of the Buddha.

From a study of the chronology of the Sanskrit sources to which the *Maṇimēkalai* is indebted, we may gather that this Buddhistic *Kāvya* could not have been written earlier than the seventh century A.D. But the citations from the early Tamil works clearly indicate that this classic could have come into existence only about the first quarter of the ninth century A.D.

As already noted, a number of works ending in 'en' like the *Maṇimēkalai* were composed about the same time. We have

[1] Winternotz, H.I.L., II, p. 118.

[2] For a detailed account of the story see Appendix.

lost most of them; but the name of one of them, the *Kalyānakathai*[1] is interesting. It reminds me of ' maṇa-nūl ' which is another name of the well-known Tamil classic *Jīvakachintāmaṇi. Yāpparungalam* mentions also another work *Amirtapati* (or *Amirtamati)* which might be ascribed to about the same date. It dealt with the story of Amirtamati occurring in *Yaśastilaka champu.*[2]

We have seen that *Silappadikāram* was based upon the fifth section of *Padirrup-pattu.* Another section of the same historical work, the eighth, was made the basis of another classic, the *Tagaḍūr-Yāttirai,* which is now lost. It is referred as a *todar-nilaich-cheyyul by* Nachchinārkkiniyar[3] and hence there is no doubt is a *Kāvya.* The work is also mentioned as an illustration of *tonmai* by Pērāsiriyar. Ancient classics like *Pura-nānūru* and *Ahanānuru* have been utilised in the preparation of this work. *Kilk-kana-kku* works like *Nāladiyār*[4] also have been laid under contribution. A few stanzas of *Chintāmani* have borrowed ideas and phrases from this work.[5] Hence this may be assigned to the latter half of the ninth century. It is said that this is like Champu a work of mixed prose and verse, the prose section predominating.[6] It also contained a large admixture of foreign words.[7] All that is left to us of this ancient work (about 44 pieces) is included in the anthology of *Purattirattu.* The author is a follower of vedic religion[8] and nothing more is known of him.

The work deals with the military expedition of Cheraman against Tagadūr (the modern Dharmapuri District) belonging to Adigaiman. Yāttirai is a technical term meaning military expedition. These two kings were cousins[9] and hence the work, like the *Mahābhārata,* is an account of a war between cousins due to land hunger.

[1] Yapparungalam, sutra 74, p. 215.
[2] Yap. sutra 96 p. 432 *Kalaik-kadir,* Special issue; 1950, pp. 38-43.
[3] *Purattinai* 17, comm.
[4] Purat. 227: Naladi. 307.
[5] Purat. 1405=Chinta=2286, 2287.
[6] Tol. Porul. 485, Perasiriyar.
[7] Tol. Porul, 485, Nach.
[8] Purattirattu, 19.
[9] *Purat.* 776.

Some Sangam poets such as Arisil-kiḻār, Ponmudiyār and Sangam kings such as Adigaimān and Chēramān occur in this work as *dramatis personae.* Arisil-kiḻār and Pon-mudiyār are the court poets of Cheraman. Perumpākkan, perhaps a translation of Mahā-pārsva, is the commander of Adigaiman's army and Nedun-kēraḷan is the commander of the Cheraman's forces. A pitched fight between these two warriors seems to have caught the imagination of the poet, who describes it with great skill and in elaborate detail. While besieging the city of Tagaḍūr, Nedun-kēralan falls in the battle-field and his mother seeks his body pierced through and through and lying on a bed of arrows. This touching scene is described in very poignant terms.[1]

Jivaka-Chintāmani

The beginning of the tenth century saw a renewal of literary activity of the Jains and the *Jīvaka Chintāmani* may be taken as the first fruit of this activity. This poetic *kāvya* was composed in *viruttam* metre which found its way slowly from Sanskrit prosody. Its author was Tiruttakka Dēvar who probably lived during the reign of Satyavakya Konguni Varma Bhūtagapperumānaḍigaḷ (A.D. 908-950).[2] So Tiruttakka-devar must have lived in the first half of the tenth century. The Sanskrit sources which Devar used were *Kshatrachūdāmani* of Vādibha-simha (ninth century) and *Gadyachintāmani,* and we find literal translations from them. Lines from earlier classics are also found imbedded in this Tamil work and several stanzas from *Kaḷavaḷinarpādu* are borrowed freely. Just as Devar utilised these ancient works, his work, in turn, was utilised by several poets of later times. It is considered a masterpiece, though its construction is defective in many respects.

Jīvaka-Chintāmani is one of the *Pancha-Kāvyas,* the other four being the *Śilappadikāram* the *Manimēkalai,* the *Vaḷiyāpati* and the *Kuṇḍalakēsi.* The *Valaiyāpati* has, except for a few citations, completely disappeared. Even the story of the poem

[1] *Purat.* 1045. We may be sure that this work was extant about the time of Nachchinarkkiniyar. The editors of the last century such as Kalattur Vedagiri Mudaliar were making claims that they possessed manuscripts of this work and even mentioned it as one of the works under preparation for the press.

[2] See introduction to the samajam edition of Jivaka-Chintamani.

is not known. A later Purana in Tamil, *Vaisiyapuranam,* gives a story purporting to be the theme of the Valiyapati wherein Kāli is made the supreme goddess. But this is impossible. From its stanzas cited by ancient commentators[1], we might infer that its author was a Jain. There cannot be any reasonable doubt that this was Jaina *kāvya.* Some 66 stanzas from it are included in the *Puṟattiraṭṭu.* Two other stanzas are found in the commentary of *Yāpparungalam,* and we might surmise that some of the stanzas occurring in the commentary of *Silappadikāram*[2] belong to this work. The commentary on *Takkayākgapparaṇi* (425) says that the poet (Oṭṭakkūttar) thought highly of *Vaḷaiyāpāti* for its poetic beauty. It is interesting to note that this work also like the *Silappadikāram,* the *Maṇimēkalai* and the *Chintāmaṇi* has incorporated a Kural (345) in one of its stanzas.[3] Being one of the earliest works in *viruttam* metre, we may be justified in ascribing it to the first half of the tenth century.

Kundalakesi

The last of the Pancha-kavyas; the *Kuṇḍalakēsi,* is another work not now extant. But its story is preserved in the commentary on *Nīlakēsi* (st. 176). It is also found in the Pali *Theri-gatha,* the songs of the Lady Elders. Hence we may be certain that it was a *Bauddha kavya.* Its author was Nathagupta. The story is as follows:

Kuṇḍalakēsi was a Vaisya maiden. One day while she was playing on the terrace of her mansion, she happened to see a Vaisya youth, Kāḷan, who under sentence of death was being escorted to the state prison. With this youth, who, though a follower of Buddhism, was a gambler and robber, the maiden fell violently in love. Her father approached the king, influenced him to pardon the youth, and gave his daughter in marriage to him. One day, in one of her love-sulks Kuṇḍalakēsi charged Kāḷan with being a thief. This hurt him and he resolved to kill her. With this object in view, he inveigled her to visit a mountain with him. As soon as the couple reached the summit of a hill,

[1] Silap. IX, 13 com.: Tolkappiyam, 148 Nach.

[2] 6, 82-108, comm.

[3] *Purat* 422.

Kāḷan disclosed his intention to kill his wife. She in her turn made a secret resolve to put an end to his life first and said to him, ' If I am to be killed, let me first circumambulate you and then die.' She was allowed to do so. When she was just behind him while going round, she pushed him over the steep hill. Kāḷan fell down and died; but being a Buddhist he attained salvatiom. Kuṇḍalakēsi, stricken with remorse and grief for her departed husband, renounced the world and turned an ascetic. She held disputations with the leading exponents of several religions and established the supreme excellence of Buddhism. She led a devout Buddhistic life and finally attained Moksha.[1]

This *Kāvya* is referred to by the commentator of *Vīrasōḻiyam* as ' *Agalakkavī* that is an elaborate poem and it is also believed to contain many rare words of unknown meaning.[2] From the definition of Agalakkavi or Vistarakavi[3], we might infer that this *Kavya* partook of the nature of the tripartite Tamil-*iyal, isai* and *natakam* and that it displayed a knowledge of the several arts. There are 19 stanzas of this work in *Puṟāttirāṭṭu,* besides 25 stanzas in full and about 180 fragments in the commentary of *Nilakēsi.*

Besides this work of polemics, there were other works of the same nature, which must also be ascribed to the latter half of the tenth century. One of these works is *Nilakēsi,* a Jain work which takes the stanzās of *Kuṇḍalakēsi* and controverts them in detail. There is a valuable commentary on this work by Samayadivākara Munivar. The plot of the story is not edifying; but it throws considerable light on the nature of mediaeval controversies. *Nilakēsi* is mentioned along with *Anjanakēsi* and *Pingalakēsi* in *Yāpparungalam* commentary (Sutra 4 p. 30, Sutra 95 p. 401). But of these other works nothing is known and there is absolutely no trace of them anywhere.

Minor Kavyas

The Jains have produced minor *Kavyas* as well. Most of these are very inferior productions and it is very doubtful whether

[1] The Therigathai substitutes Bhadra and Sattuka for Kuṇḍalakesi and kāḷan respectively.
[2] Alankaram, 4.
[3] *Yap.* Com., Sutra 96 p. 422: M.V.V. Edition. Divakāram (xii. 51).

they would be entitled to a place among *Kavyas* of merit. These have been recently clubbed together and styled as Ain-ciru-kāppiam (the five minor *Kavyas*). There is no authority for this grouping. One Kāvya only deserves to be known and it is *Chūḷāmaṇi*. Its author was Tōlā-moḷit-tēvar. The subject-matter of the work has been taken from the Sanskrit *Mahāpurāṇa* which was written in A.D. 897. Hence this *Kāvya* must have been composed in the first half of the tenth century. A sanskrit *sloka* and the Tamil Rajarajan-ulā (Couplet 186) mentions this work after *Chintāmaṇi:* we may be justified in ascribing this work to A.D. 950. In poetic diction, in felicitous pharasing, in the sweet mellifluous flow of verse this takes a very high rank among Tamil *Kāvyas.*

Lexicons and Grammars

The Jain authors were well-known for their versatility. In addition to literature, they also interested themselves in lexicons and grammars. The earliest *Nighantu* (lexicon) in Tamil, *Divākaram,* is a Jain work. Forgetting this, Saivaite scribes and editors have placed Siva's name at the beginning of the first section in contravention of Jain practice. Its author was Divākarar and as it was composed under the patronage of Sēndan[1], son of Aruvandai and a chieftain of Ambar, it was named ' *Sēndan Divākaram* '.

The work consists of twelve sections, each called a *togudi.* This name reminds one of the Sanskrit term *nighantu* which means a collection. The first ten sections of *Divākaram* deal with class vocabularies, that is to say, vocables divided into sections according to subject-matter, such as names of gods and heavenly bodies of ranks and orders of men and parts of the body, names of birds, beasts, insects, names of plants, trees, names of places, countries, rivers, names of tools, weapons, names of natural products, names of qualities and of actions, and terms connected with sounds and words. The eleventh section deals with homonyms and the twelfth with group-names arranged in arithmetical progression.

[1] Puram 385 is in praise of a certain Ambar Kilavon Nallaruvandai; probably this Aruvandai was an ancestor of Sendan.

The Ashtānga-yogā is given in detail and the work betrays a knowledge of Patanjali's *Yoga-sutra Bhāshya* (c. sixth century A.D.)[1] Hence the work was composed latter than the sixth century A.D. The Chalukyās and their boar-banner are mentioned in this work. There is a clear reference to Panchanga in astrology and this may imply a date subsequent to the eighth century. The eighteen Puranās and upa-puranās are enumerated. Lastly the term ' abhaya·' occurs as a name of the Cholas in general. Hence we may conclude that the work was composed about the tenth century A.D.

The colophons at the end of the ninth and the tenth sections of the *Divākaram* say that the patron Sendan composed an *antadi* on Siva's consort and sang about the strong bow which destroyed the Rakshasas, the famous bow which routed the enemies in the Mahabharata battle and the Javelin which killed Dārukasura. Probably these poems formed part of some small *Kāvyas* and if so, the *antādi* and *Kāvyas* must be ascribed to the tenth century A.D. The nature of these references lead us to infer that Sendan was a follower of Hinduism. There was a contemporary poetess Avvai by name who composed a panegyric poem on this patron (colophon, 3rd section).

The Jains interested themselves in the preparation, not only of *nighantu,* but also of various works on Tamil Grammar. Some of these works mentioned in *Yāpparungalavirutti* may be ascribed to the tenth century A.D. *Aniy-iyal* dealt probably with rhetoric; *Panirupāttiyal* and *Pāttiyaḷ marapu* with the characteristics of the several kinds of poems known at the time; *Seyirriyam* and *Vilakkattanār-Kūttu* with dance and dramaturgy; *Kanakkiyal* was perhaps an arithmetical work like *Lilavati.*[2] *Sanga-yāppu* must have been a work on Tamil prosody. *Parimāṇam* probably treated of logic. The variety of subjects noted here gives us an indication of the activity of Jains in this period, in regard to the several departments of knowledge.

Of these works, *Panniru-paṭṭiyal* is avilable in full. It is believed to be a joint production of twelve authors; but the

[1] Macdonnel, *India's Past,* p. 154; Keith, History of Sanskrit Literature, p. 490.

[2] A Sanskrit work by Bhaskaracharya.

authors in the edition now avilable number more. Some of them bear names **familiar to us in the** Sangam age. From a close study of this work, we might gather an idea of the extent of Tamil literature in the tenth century.

The Saivaite authors were no less active. Gandārādityā wrote some hymnal pieces of great merit and he is usually identified with the son of Chola Parāntakā I. There is reason to think that a few grammatical treatises such as *Mayechchurar-yāppu* (ninth century) were also written by them. The Vaishnavaites were engaged in preparing a collection of their sacred hymns. Sri Nāthamuni is the accredicated anthologist.

The period we have been treating is the longest and most important in the history of Tamil literature. The Sangam works, both the earlier and the later, were collected into anthologies during this period. The influence of the Aryans steadily and rapidly increased in the south till it reached its culmination in the great Bhakti movement between the seventh and the ninth centuries. The hymnal literature was a result of this. The Buddhists and the Jains gave a moral tone to the Tamilian society and literature was a result of this. The Buddhists and the Jains gave a moral tone to the Tamilian society and literature and inspired them to literary expressions of a diversified character. The didactic works, grammars, *Kavyas,* lexicons and other works were produced in abundance.

The Tamil language also grew rich owing to its contact with the Sanskrit language and its literature. Technical terms belonging to several departments of knowledge found entry in our language, and the complexity of life which was the result of the great religious movements gave rise to new modes of expression. The style became more flexible and resilient and new metres were adopted by poets in their verification. The *Tolkāppiyam,* the *Kurāl,* the *Silappadikāram* the *Tiruvāsagam* and the *Nālāyiram* were the outstanding productions of the Tamil genius.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX
STORY OF MANIMEKALAI

The first section announces the celebration of Indira's festival at Kaveripumpattinam in a certain year. It is said that this festival was first inaugurated at this pattinam by Tungeyilerinda-todittol-sembiyan, a great ancestor of the Chola dynasty[1] and that it was continued in Indira's temple year after year at a particular season for 28 days. In this year, the leaders of several religions, astrologers, gods in their disguises, people speaking the eighteen languages, the five great groups of king's officers and the eight groups of the royal household met in large numbers and decided upon the celebration. The city was accordingly decorated for the occasion. Madhavi, the courtesan-wife of Kovalan and her daughter Manimekalai abstain from public dance on this joyous occasion and the whole city seething with the discontent reviled them. Chitrapati, Madhavi's mother informed her of the town-talk and urged her to join in the festivities. But she refused and sent back the messenger Vasantamalai with the words that she has taken the nun's vow (lit. the embodiment of Dharma) on the salutary advice of a certain Aravanaadigal and that Manimekalai hated the courtesan's life. The latter engaged in stringing a garland of flowers shed tears in silence on hearing the great distress of her parents. Her mother noticed this and in order to divert her mind proposed to send her to a flower garden for gathering flowers.

Suthamati, her brahmin friend who had a miraculous escape from the hands of a Vidyadhara, advises her against sending Manimekalai alone, mentions some groves such as Ilavandigai solai-Uyyana (Udyana), Sampativanam and Kavera-vanam with their lurking dangers and offers to accompany her to an *Upavana* which contains a crystal-hall of miraculous powers. Accordingly they go along the streets in which all sorts of people including a drunkard who pursues a *digambara* ascetic offering him toddy and pokes fun at his dirty unwashed body[2] are enjoying the various sights, Manimekalai herself providing them with some

[1] The *Mahabharata* says that king Uparicharavasu introduced this festival in this world (I,164)

[2] The drunkard scene reminds us of the famous *Mattavilasa parahsana.*

distraction, and reach the *Upavana* (III). While she is there, a ruttish elephant gets beyond control and roams the streets of the city causing great disturbance. This elephant is subdued by Prince Udayakumaran and after this heroic deed he passes along the courtesan's street and learns that Manimekalai has entered the *Upavana.* He goes there and meeting Suthamati alone tells her of his great love for Manimekalai. She reminds him of his noble descent from Karikala and exposes to him the utter loathesomeness of the human body and advises him to go away without molesting Manimekalai. But before he leaves, he sees Manimekalai in the crystal-hall (IV). Then he tries to enter the hall; but finding no entrance, he turns to Suthamati and learns particulars of her life. Here the callousness of the Jain ascetics who spurn her and her father in extreme distress is contrasted with the kindliness of the Buddhist monks who give them shelter. Then he leaves the *Upavana* vowing that he would have Manimekalai whatever the consequences. Manimekalai comes out of the crystal-hall and tells Suthamati of her love for Udayakumaran, in spite of his harsh words. Just then Goddess Manimekalai appears in the form of a known ladyfriend having miraculous powers and praises lord Buddha. The day wore on and evening came (V). The goddess[1] asks them the reason of their distress and Suthamati mentions the pursuit of Udayakumaran. On hearing this the goddess advises them to betake themselves to Chakravalak-kottam. Suthamati asks to know the explanation of the name. The origin of the kottam is explained and Manimekalai put to sleep by a spell, is taken by the goddess to Manipallava, a small island, thirty yojanas away.[2] Then the goddess appears before Udayakumaran who is spending a sleepless night, and advises him to give up all thoughts of Manimekalai. She also wakes up Suthamati and

[1] About goddess Manimekalai: seē E.B. Cowell: jatāka Tales, No. 442, 539; 'More on Manimekalai-I. HQ, III, No. 2 and VI, pp. 597 ff.

[2] Here occur some interesting details about some temple structures practices observed by Kapalikas and other sects and the Buddhistic cosmology and gods such as rupa-brahmas, arupa-brahmas, etc. These Brahma heavens are variously enumerated, as sixteen, seventeen and eighteen. The Mahavastu was given the number sixteen (the Bodhisattav Doctrine, Har Dayal p. 231) and probably Manimekalai follows this authority. Of this work, Winternitz says 'It was enlarged in the fourth century A.D. and perhaps still later, by additions and interpolations' H.I.L., II, 247).

tells her that Manimekalai would return to Kaveripumpattinum after learning of her past births, and that as a sign of her arrival, several omens would occur. Suthamati is asked to remind Madhavi of a former dream of hers about the future of Manimekalai and console her. Then her past birth is revealed to her, when Manimekalai is said to have been her sister Lakshmi (VII). In the island of Manipallava, Manimekalai is greatly distressed and wanders here and there when a Buddha pedestal *(pīthikā)* of miraaculous powers appears before her (VIII). Manimekalai worships the pedestal and learns of her past birth (IX).[1]

Then goddess Manimekalai appears before her, singing the praise of the Buddha's pedestal and reveals to her that Udayakumaran is the same as Rahula of the previous birth and Madhavi and Suthamati are respectively Tarai and Virai, her sisters in the previous birth. These sisters meet Aravana-adigal and on his advice worship the Pāda-pankaja hill on the banks of the Ganges, acquire merit and take new births. Again the goddess tells her that she would hear the doctrines of other religionists, teaches her three mantras, one for changing her form at will, the second for travelling through air and the third for appeasing hunger, and then disappears (X). Then Manimekalai walks here and there, enjoying the beautiful scenery of Manipallava. She is accosted by a lady who asks her who she is. Manimekalai gives details of her past and present births, and in her turn, she desires to know who the lady is. The latter tells her that she is Dīpa-tilakā and that ever since her arrival at the island after visiting the Samanta-kūta and worshipping the Buddha's footprint, thereon, she is keeping guard, under orders of Indira, over the Buddha's pedestal. She also states that there is a sacred pool named Gomukhi and out of it arises on every birth-day of the Buddha (the full moon day of Vaisakha,

[1] This past birth is said to have taken place during the time of Brahmadharmā, brother-in-law of Attipatti, King of purva-desa in the Gāndhāra country, his capital being Idavaya. To the north of this capital ran the Kāyangārai river and beyond that was Avanthi. Brahmadharma prophesied the destruction of Idavaya and of 400 yojanas of land in the Naga country by an earthquake and advised the shifting of capital to Avanti. The prophesy came to pass. A daughter named Lakshmi was born of Ravivarman, king of Yasodharanagara and Amutapati; and married Rahula, son of Attipati when the married couple came and paid homage to Brahmadharma, the latter again predicted the death of Rāhula by the bite of a snake Drishtivisha. The prediction came true and Lakshmi immolated herself on her husband's funeral pyre. Then she took birth as Manimekalai at Kaveri-pumpattinam.

lit. after 13 *naksnatras* have passed in the Rishabha month of the spring season) Aputtira's Amudasurabhi, a vessel of miraculous powers yielding food at one's wish, that it is just that day when the vessel in expected and that it would come of its own accord into the hands of Manimekalai.

The vessel appears and Manimekalai praises Buddha. Then Dipatilaka describes the suffering caused by hunger and extols those who appease it.[1] Manimekalai replies that she is eager to experience the delight of appeasing the hunger of the people. That the last thought in one's life is sure to have effect in one's next birth is exemplified by her reference to her feeding the sage Sadhuchakra. She then pronounces a *mantra,* goes by air and presents herself before Madhavi and Suthamati. Their past birth is revealed to them and they are advised to learn of the ascetic path from Aravanaadigal. They all go to obtain *darsan* of this *aḍigaḷ* (XI). They meet him and Manimekalai informs him of all that took place and requests him to explain the mystery of Aputtira and his *Amudasurabhi.* Aravanar relates to her the death of Tarai and Virai and their rebirth as Madhavi and Suthamati. He refers further to the decline of Buddhism and to the birth of Buddha in the year 1616 of an unknown era for re-instating it and to the various miracles presaging the great event. He promises to teach them the way to salvation after certain notable events have occurred and advises Manimekalai to appease the hunger of the multitude by means of the Amudasurabhi (XII). Then the history of Aputtira is narrated by him in detail. How Aputtira, a waif, son of brahmin woman who discarded him at birth was saved by a cow and later adopted as a son by a brahmin of Vayanangōdu, how he tried to rescue a cow about to be sacrificed, how he was insulted by the brahmins, how he was ultimately deserted by his adoptive father and how he lived in a mandapa of the temple of the goddess of learning (chintā-dēvi), begging and feeding the poor-all this is graphically described (XIII).[2]

[1] Here II. 76-77 is an echo of Naladi 285. A reference to Visvamitra who was about to eat dog's flesh is found in II. 82-91, cf X, 110.

[2] A few references here are interesting. Of the *rishis* of old. Achala is said to be the son of a cow, Sringi, the son of a deer, Vrinchi the son of a tiger and Kesa-kambala, the son of a fox. The *Mahabarata* (Adi. 50) says that 'Sringi' was the son of a cow by

At the dead of a night he is approached by a number of hungry persons. Seeing his distress, Chintradevi presents a never failing begging bowl and he lives happily feeding men, beasts and birds. Pleased at this, god Indira comes and offers him àny boon he may desire; but he spurns the offer. At this Indìra becomes angry, causes rain and makes crop plenteous. No one needs the help of Āputtiran and he is greatly distressed. He hears that Sāvaka' country is famine-stricken and goes there in a ship. But the ship flounders on the way, and he is stranded in the unpeopled island of Manipallava. Finding his begging bowl useless, he throws it in the pool of Gomukhi commanding it to appear once in a year and get into the hands of a deserving person. Then he fasts unto death and is born as a cow's son in the Savaka country (XIV).[1] The cow's past history is given next. She is the same cow as fed Aputtira in his previous birth and she becomes his mother now. On his birth on the full moon day of Viśākha several miracles happen, and the *devas* of Chakravalak-kottam consult the Kandir-pavai (lit, the pillar-image).[2] The pavai informs them of the birth of a great being in the Manipallava island and asks them to learn his history from the sage Aravanan. She expresses the wish that the first morsel of food should be from the hands of a chaste woman and Vidyadhari Kaya-Chandikai tells her that Adirai is well-known for her chastity and that she is a proper person for taking alms from (XV).

Then Adirai's story is related in detail. Her husband Śāduvan, a native of Kavirippumpattinam, having lost all his property through his love for courtesan, seeks to earn money by trading overseas and boards a ship. The ship is caught in a storm and capsizes. But Sāduvvan escapes with life, swims and reaches a mountainous tract where Nagas (naked cannibals) live. A report reaches the ears of Adirai that her husband is

the sage Samika. Two vedic rishis (Vasishta and Agastva) are said to be sons of the celestial courtesan Tilottammā. There is a reference in I. 103 to a stanza in *Palamoli* (375).

[1] Here the appearance of Indra on the quaking of his pandukambala is mentioned.

[2] It is said that Maya, the celestial architect made this image representing the god Duvatika who knew the events of all times. Aravanan is the oracle resolving many mysteries in the *Kāvya.* The sage tells Manimekalai that Bhumichandra, the king of Savaka, has taken the cow's son in adoption and further asks her to dispense food to all the hungry people at kaverippumpattinam. manimekalai in her nun's garb goes about the streets begging, distributing food.

drowned and she tries to immolate herself in fire. But the fire leaves her unharmed and an aerial voice informs her that her husband is alive. She returns home and awaits the return of Śāduvan, doing charitable deeds. Śāduvan is tired and sleeps and the Nagas approach him with the intention of making a delicious meal of him. Understanding this, Śāduvan talks to them in their own language, and he is taken by them to their *guru* who was with his wife in the midst of toddy-pots, rotten flesh, and white dried bones, looking like a couple of bears. The guru is attracted by Śāduvan's speech and he orders his Nagas to feed him sumptuously with flesh and drink and give him a youthful girl. Śaduvan refuses these and the *guru* asks him whether there is anything else in the world which will give equal pleasure. The latter is taught the doctrine of rebirth, of good and evil deeds (Karma) and of happiness and misery as a result of Karma.[1] A code of life is also given. Afterwards, Śāduvan takes leave of him, gets on board a merchant vessel and comes home. The husband and wife are making daily gifts and acquiring merits.

Manimekalai hearing this story enters the house of the Chaste lady and stands like an unadorned picture. Adirai fills the Amudasurabhi with food and blesses it (XVI). The Amudasurabhi yields an inexhaustible supply of food and the hunger of every one who comes is appeased. Seeing this, Kaya-Chandikai is struck with wonder and narrating her own story requests Manimekalai to pacify her ceaseless hunger.[2] Food is given to her from the Amudasurabhi, and she is rid of her curse once for all. She directs Manimekalai to go to Ulakavaravi [lit. The

Here a reference to Uadayana's story is found. 'When the Vatsa, king of Kosambi, was entrapped and imprisoned, the brahmin Yogi (Yaugandharayana) comes to Ujjain for releasing him and played the part of a madi man, the people gathered round him to overflowing sympathy. Even so Manimekalai in her run's apparel excites sympathy and a crowd gathers round her'.

[1] Here the Charvaka doctrine *i.e.*, the eqicurean view is controverted.

[2] Kaya-chandikai is the wife of Vidyadhara belonging to Kancanapura. The couple in their aerial journey to the Podiyil hill, alight on the banks of a river; while there they see a jambolan fruit as big as a palmyra. Jambolan yields only one fruit at intervals of 12 years and a person eating it would not feel hunger for 12 years. An ascetic Viruchchikan by name, knowing the virtue of the fruit is regularly living upon it. This time he leaves it on the banks and goes to the river for a bath before making a repast of it. On his return, he finds the fruit crushed and made unfit for use Kaya-chandikai who has done

world's charity house in the Chakravalakkottam, where all the destitutes and the poor resort for charity and where she will have ample scope for giving alms from Amudasurabhi (XVII)]. Manimekalai goes there accordingly. Her grand-mother Chitrapati learning of this, vows that she would bring her and Udayakumaran together. She goes to the prince and persuades him to go to Ulakavaravi and seek Manimekalai there. The prince takes her advice and finds Manimekalai at Ulakavaravi in the very act of dispensing food. The latter pays him obeisance, but immediately retires to the shrine of Champapati, assumes the guise of Kayachandikai and comes out again with the Amudasurabhi. Not knowing this, Udayakumaran takes a vow that he would never leave the shrine until the goddess shows Manimekalai to him and lies there fasting (XVIII).[1] Then deity represented in one of the several images there tells him that his vow is of no avail. Udayakumaran is bewildered. He remembers the former advice of a deity to forget Manimekalai and the supernatural powers of the Amudasurabhi and the words of this deity increases his wonder. He leaves the shrine in the evening, heaving a deep sigh. Manimekalai, thinking that Udayakumaran would not leave her if she appears in her own person, assumes Kayachandikai's form, goes about the city and dispenses food.

One day she goes to the prison-house to relieve the distress of the poor prisoners and feeds them. The gaolers wonder at the miraculous powers of the feeding vessel, Amudasurabhi, go to the king Māvaṇ-kiḷḷi[2] who with his queen in enjoying himself in a pleasure garden and inform him of the vessel and its

this is cursed by him and by the curse, she loses her knowledge of the mantra for aerial travel and also suffers from unappeasable hunger. Then her husband advises her to stay at kaverippumpattinam, 'the city of the wealthy men who are the refuge of the poor and the disabled.' He comes there once in a year during the time of Indra's festival to see his distressed wife.

[1] Chitrapati describes the nature of courtesan's life and mentions certain ancient customs by which ex-communication of obnoxious person is effected. The person is made to carry on her head seven bricks round the public stage and then she is banished. This custom is referred to in Silappadikaram also (XIV, 146-7). Ahalya's episode of Svahadevi taking the forms of the wives of six among the Saptarishis and having intercourse with her husband Agni (cf. Mahabharata, Vanaparva, 226-7) are also mentioned by Chitrapati.

[2] The king Māvan-killi is said to have married a princess of Bana family (lit. the beautiful Lakshmi-like daughter of the family of Mahabali). This legendary descent from Mahabali does not seem to occur earlier than eighth century A.D. He is also said to

beautiful owner. The king directs them to fetch her. When she appears, he asks her about the history of her own self and of the vessel. Replying to him, she requests him to transform the prison into a charity home, Udayakumaran enters Ulakavaravi with the intention of capturing Manimekalai (who has assumed the form of Kanyachandikai) when she gets out. Just at that moment the Vidyadhara Kanchanan comes in search of his wife Kayachandikai and mistaking Manimekalai for his wife, approaches her with words of love. The latter without hearing him turns to Udayakumaran, tells him of the ugliness of the human body and advises him to go away. Kanchanan takes him to be Kayachandikai's paramour and vows to kill him. Udayakumaran leaves her then, but seeks to meet her at the dead of night. The Vidyadhara lying in wait kills him and advances towards Manimekalai, then the Pillar-deity orders him to desist, narrates that the real Kayachandikai, while flying over Vindhya mountain in her progress towards her home, has been drawn by the goddess Vindā-katigai and devoured and tells him that he will have to suffer for the murder committed by him (XX).

Manimekalai who is inside Champapati temple hears all these, abandons her disguise and lamenting the death of Udayakumaran advances near his corpse. Then the pillar deity forbids her, advises her not to distress herself and reveals the past karma which has brought out this end. Further the deity predicts her imprisionment by the king and her release by the intercession of the sage Aravana. The journey to Savaka country, her visit to Manipallavam in his company, his darsan of Buddha pitikai and Dipatilakai, the revelation of the events of his past birth and his country are all foretold. It is also said that Manimekalai would enter the Vañji city in the garb of a sage and learn the doctrines of the various sects. The pillar-deity further tells her of its own history. Manimekalai then importunes the deity to reveal her own history to the very end. She is informed that she would go to Kanchi where a famine would be raging and where her arrival is eagerly awaited for by Madhavi, Suthamati and Aravanar, that she would relieve the distress of people

have sent his heir apparent against Cheras and Pandyas and won a victory at Kariyaru. Evidently this king of a historical figure could not be identical with Kariyarruttunjiya Nedungilli of puram, 47. A reference to the Smiths (kammas) of the Maharatta country is also found. (XIX)

and that she would inform Aravanar of the doctrines of the various sects she learnt at Kanchi. There-upon Aravanar would tell her that she would stay at Kanchi, till the advent of the Buddha preaching the true Dharma. He would further inform her that she would a faithful follower of the path of Dharma and that after her death, she would take male births in the country of Uttara-Magadha, and at long last would become the first among the disciples of Buddha and then attain Nirvana.[1] It is also further revealed that it was the goddess Manimekalai, to whom one of her ancestors about to be drowned in the sea owed his life, that carried her from the Upavana to Manipallava and made her see the Buddha pedestal (XXI).

Day dawning, the worshippers of the pillar-deity and of Champapati see the corpse of Udayakumaran cruelly murdered and inform the ascetics in the Chakravalak-kottam; they in their turn approach the king and inform him of Udayakumaran's pursuit of Manimekalai in her guise as Kayachandikai; prefacing their information with instances of attempts at outraging the modesty of chaste women. Kakanta's two sons make this attempt one against Marudi, a brahmin woman, and the other against Visakhi, a Vaisya woman, and come to a violent death. Kakanti, another name for Kavirippūmpattinam, is incidentally explained as being derived from this Kakanta, a prostitute's son appointed to rule the country by its legitimate ruler who fled in fear of Parasurama's anger.

Udayakumar's father is only sorry that such a son should have been born in the royal line of Maṉunīti Chola, cremates him immediately and imprisons Manimekali (XXII).[2] The king thereafter sends Vasantavai to his queen and tries to console her. The queen vowing deep revenge, appears pacified, goes to her lord asks him to release Manimekalai and keeps the latter in her own custody. She tries various means of disgracing

[1] This statement is important as it indicates the origin of the story of the Manimekalai. it must be traced to an *avadana* about the pastbirths of either Sariputta or *Mogglana* who were the chief disciples of the Buddha.

[2] A famous Kural (st. 55) is quoted in this canto. A King should within seven days of the commission of a crime punish the criminal: otherwise higher powers would interfere. A single unmarried person will not attain *svarga* even if he does innumerable acts of charity; If the king fails in his duty of protecting his people, then the ascetics will fail in their observances and the chastity of woman will not be safe. These are some of the statements which it will not be difficult to find echoed in Smritis: the word இந்த (l. 155) and the title சோழிக ஏனாதி found only in late works are found here.

her. First medicine is administered to bring about mental disorder. Next a person is hired to proclaim that Manimekalai had sexual intercourse with him and to approach her with lustful intentions in her private room. Lastly all food is denied her and she is kept starving on the false ground that she is a dyspeptic patient. But Manimekalai remains unscathed. Then the queen seeing this miracle falls at her feet and asks forgiveness. She is forgiven and the story of Udayakumaran's past life is revealed to her (XXIII). On hearing of the death[1] of Udayakumaran and of the imprisonment of Manimekalai, Chitrapati goes to the queen and requests her to leave her grand-daughter in her own charge. She also informs her that a great calamity would occur in the kingdom. The city of Kaverippūmpattinam would be destroyed by sea because of the forgetfulness of the king to celebrate Indra's festival, in his grief for Pīlivalai, daughter of Valaivanan, king of the Naga country and his queen Vāsamayilai. But Chitrapati's request is refused. Then Aravanar with Madhavi and Suthamati comes to the palace. The queen worships him. The latter teaches her the twelve *nidanas* (or causes) and promises to teach these and other things to Manimekalai, when she has learnt the doctrines of the several sects. Manimekalai pays her homage to Aravanar, flies to Naga-pura ruled by Punya-raja, son of Bhumi-chandra and learns of his greatness from a sage (XXIV).[2] This king enters a grove and there gets from an ascetic instructions on the Buddhisic dharma. He happens to see Manimekalai and asks her who she is. An officer in coat of mail (Kanchuka)

[1] The ancient practice of reclining the body of an old or sickly man in his last moments, on a *darbha* bed and cleaving in two with the intention of his soul reaching *vira-svarga* is referred to here. cf. also puram 93. Two stories are about the incestuous connection of a son with his mother and the other about a hunter killing a pregnant deer both giving up their lives in contrition are also narrated to exemplify the evil consequences of lust and hunting. Word forms like *kattanru* (காத்தன்று) *kondanru* (கொண்டன்று) and *takkanru* (தக்கன்று) have acquired a new significance not found in ancient literature. New word-forms like 'anda' (அந்த) and 'nān' (நான்) are also found.

[2] Details of 121 celestial damsels who first settled at kaverippumpattinam and became the progenitors of the courtesan families there, are given by Chitrapati. The twelve *nidanas* are briefly mentioned here. Umbalam 11. 27 is a new word: Per (11. 167), is a later form and porai-y-uyirttal (11. 165) has acquired a new meaning. The destruction of Kaverippumpattinam is mentioned as a contemporaneous event. It is well-known that the Silappadikaram is a later work than the Manimekalai and the former *Kāvya* has in its opening canto a benedictory triplet on Pum-pukar another name for the above *pattinam*. Immediately after in the same Canto, Pukar is compared to the Podiyil and the Himalayas in that it knows no end. These statements are inexplicable if the destruction were a historical fact.

makes known her identity and says that he comes to know of her from Aravanar when he went to Kavirippumpattinam seeking alliance with the king Killivalava. Manimekalai reminds Punya-raja of his miraculous eating bowl and advises him to go to Manipallava and learn of his past birth. Then she flies to Manipallava, gets *darsan* of the Buddha pedestal and as predicted by Brahmadharma, obtains knowledge of her past birth.

In the meanwhile the raja meets his mother Amarasundari and from her learns particulars of his present birth. He regrets having wasted his days in worldly pleasures and expresses his intention of renouncing his kingdom. His minister Janamitra counsels him against this. Then the raja entrusting his kingdom to the care of the minister goes to Manipallava and meets Manimekalai there. She shows him the Buddha's pedestal which reveals to him his past birth. He remembers having received the eating bowl from the goddess of learning (Kalaip-pavai or Chinta-devi) and praises her. Afterwards both the raja and Manimekalai repair to Gomukhi pond and while resting under the shade of Punnai nearby. Dipa-tilakai appears before them and informs Punyaraja that his own bones in his previous birth and the bones of his companion in voyage lie buried under the sand. She tells Manimekalai also that Kavirippumpattinam has been devoured by the angry sea, disclosing the reason why it was thus destroyed, that the king Nedumudikkilli, Aravanar, Madhavi and Suthamati went to Vanji, and that the goddess Manimekalai would reveal to her how she rescued Kovalan, an ancestor of hers. Thereafter Punya-raja digs, finds the bones and goes into a swoon. Manimekalai revives him and exhorts him to give food and cloth to the indigent which is the highest form of charity. Then she leaves for Vanji (XXV).

She alights at the outskirts of the city and being overcome by a desire to see the images of her parents Kovalan and Kannagi, enters their temple and makes obeisance. Then she begs to Kannagi to tell her why she burnt the city of Madurai. Kannagi replies as follows: 'I could not bear the sight of my murdered husband and so I began to burn the city. The guardian-deity of Madurai appeared before me and informed me that our grievous calamity was due to our past *Karma*. Formerly, in the Kalinga country, Vasu was the ruler of Singapuram and Kumaran, of Kapilapuram. Between them,

there was incessant strife. Once, a certain Sangaman accompanied by his wife Nili was selling merchandise in Singapuram and envious of his success, Bharatan who was serving Vasu, informed the latter that Sangaman was a spy of the enemy and had him murdered. Thereupon Nili was struck with immense grief, cursed that those who were instrumental in causing the death of her husband would come to a similar violent end and gave up her life falling from a precipice. That Bharatan took birth as Kovalan. Even after hearing this, I was not pacified and I continued my destructive work. This evil deed would make us take births in the world until the avatar of the Buddha. Then we would hear Dharma from his lips and attain *nirvana*. Till that time we would be displaying mireculous powers. You would be hearing the doctrines of the various sects from their exponents; but you would remain unconvinced and finally you would follow the Buddhistic Dharma. Manimekalai learning this transforms herself into a male ascetic and enters the city of Vanji resplendent with the glory of Seran Senguttuvan (XXVI).[1] At Vanji, Manimekalai encounters as many as ten doctors of religion and learns their tenets. They are Naiyayika, Saiva, Brahma, Vaishnava, Vedavadin, Ajivaka, Nirgrantha, Sankhya, Vaiseshika, and Bhutavadin. As against these ten doctrines given in detail, we find at the end of the canto, only five as the number of schools learnt by Manimekalai.[2] Then the heroine in her anger desires to see Madhavi, Suthamati and Aravanar quickly crosses the outskirts of the city and enters the city of Vanji. She passes through several streets where different occupational classes live

[1] In this canto, the story or the past birth of Kovalān and Senguttuvan's northern expedition and his bringing the stone for the image of Kannagi are narrated in terms similar to those of the *Silappudikaram*.

[2] The editor Dr. V.S. Iyer explains this discrepancy: but a more natural explanation would be to omit Buddhism out of the traditional six schools. Thus we get Vaiseshika, Nyāya, Mimamsa (purva), Arhata and Lokayata. Nyaya is Alavai, Mimamsa (purva) is Vedavadam. Arhata includes Ajivāka and Nirgantha and finally Lokayata is Bhutavadām. An evolutionary study of these systems as detailed in the Manimekalai might yield some definite results useful for chronology. But it is an independent enquiry. While explaining the Sambhava prámanam of Naiyayaika system, *magnet* (Kāntam) is given as illustration. This argues a very late date for the Manimekalai. We also find a reference to a Vaishnava-puranam (Kadal-vannan-puranam 11. 98). This might be either the Vishnupuranam or the Bhagavathapuranam, more probably the form: . r.E. Pargiter thinks it cannot be earlier than the 5th century A.D. The words *nān (நான், 11. 278)* and 'inda' *(இந்த, 11.* 285) occur in this Canto also.

and ply their trade,[1] She betakes herself to a grove where ascetics are doing penance and sees Ma-sattuvan, the father of Kovalan. She tells him of the supernatural Amudasurabhi, of Aputtiran and his birth as Punyaraja, of his learning, of his past birth at Manipallava when he sees the Buddha's pedestal of the appearance of Dipatilakai, of the destruction of Kaverippumpattinam and of the departure of Madhavi, Suthamati and Aravanar to Vanji, of the departure of Punyaraja to Nagapura and of her own, to Vanji of her seeing Kannagi's image, of her learning the tenets of the several religions and finally of her desire to learn the Buddha-Dharma from Aravanar. Ma-sattuvan, in his turn tells her of his departure to Vanji on his learning the misfortune of Kovalan and Kannagi and the destruction of Madura and also of his renunciation of the world. He also informs her that his arrival there is due to his desire to see a *Chaitya* built by his ancestor named Kovalan, removed from him by nine generations. The latter was on a visit to Imayavaramban Nedunjeraladan who was an intimate friend of his. Then a few Savanas or wandering ascetics came. Imayavaramban paid honour to them and was taught the Buddha-dharma. Kovalan hearing this built a *chaitya* here and became a Buddhist ascetic.[2] He remains at Vanji without returning to Kaviripumpattinam since he learns that the latter city would be destroyed be sea. He further tells her that her father Kovalan would learn the dharma from the Buddha himself and that he himself would likewise attain Nirvana. He directs her to go to Kanchi-puram according to the wish of Aravanar who has already gone there with Madhavi and Suthamati and asks her to relieve the distress of the famine-stricken city. Manimekalai goes there with her Amudasurabhi and was very much grieved to find the beautiful city in great desolation. She worships at the Buddha temple built by the brother of Todu-kalar-killi and stays at a grove nearby. [3] The king is duly

[1] In almost identical lines, 'Silappadikaram' describes the streets of Kavirippum-pattinam (7-58).

[2] *Padirruppattu* tell us that Imayavaramban was the father of Senguttuvan. This contradicts the statement in the Manimekalai. It is not known from Sangam works that he ever embraced Buddhism. On the contrary, he made a gift of land as Brahmadayam to a brahmin poet Kumattur-Kannanar. Most probably he was a follower of the Vedic religion.

[3] The author of the *Manimekalai* is supremely indifferent to anachronism, when the Buddha himself was going to take birth at a future time; it is preposterous to say that

informed of her arrival. He meets her, tells her of a prediction by a deity and takes her to a grove with a big pond in the middle made at the direction of the deity. She constructs a Buddha-pedestal and also temples for the worship of Dipatilakai and the goddess Manimekalai. To relieve the distress of the poor and the disabled, she dispenses food from the Amudasurabhi. Aravanar comes there and Manimekalai pays homage to him (XXVIII). The ascetic Aravanar informs her that he came to Kanchi-puram with Madhavi and Suthamati as Kaverippumpattinam was swallowed by the sea under the curses of the goddess Manimekalai and Indra. Manimekalai tells him that she knew of the destruction from Dipatilakai. She also briefly narrates to him the events that led her to come to Kanchi and requests him to teach her the true *dharma*. Accordingly she is taught as a means of understanding the truth, the nature of direct *(pratyaksha)* and Inferential *(anumana)* proof and the several fallacies pertaining thereto (XXIX).[1]

In the last canto of the *Kavya,* Aravanar teaches the Buddha dharma to Manimekalai after she has taken refuge in the *trimani,* the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. The twelve *nidanas* which consist of four Khandhas three *sandhis,* three existences and three tenses and which are helpful for *nirvana,* are treated in detail. Further the foui great truths, five *skandhas,* the six logical positions, the four kinds of good and the four consequences, the four catachistic methods are also explained

his temple was constructed at an earlier time. His justification perhaps would be that the Buddha temple was raised in honour of one of the innumerable apocryphal Buddhas!

[1] These subjects are dealt with in lines 47-472. It is well-known that the author of the Manimekalai is indebted for this section to Dinnāga's *Nyayapravesa,* though the possibility of this source being Dharmakirti's Nyayabindu is not entirely out of court. Prof. Jacobi renders it very probable that Dinnaga perhaps even Dharmakirti, was known to this Classic in Tamil (Keith's History of Sanskrit Literature: p. XXII). If the latter is true; then the *Manimekalai* is definitely later than the seventh century (ibid, p. 484). If the former only is true, then it is later than the fifth century A.D. (Winternitz, H.I.L., II, p. 362). Winternitz observes as follows:- The greatest and most independent thinker among the successors of Vasubandhu is Dinnāga, the founder of Buddhist logic, and one of the foremost figures in the history of Indian Philosophy. Only a single one of Dinnaga's works, the *Nyayapravesa,* has come down in Sanskirt; we know the others only from the Tibetan translations. The principle work of his successor Dharmakirti, the *Nyayabindhu* has come down to us in Sanskrit (ibid. p. 363). The trio-Nagarjuna, Aryadeva and Asanga, together with the trio Vasubandu Dinnaga and Dharmakirti, are called by the Tibetans 'the six ornaments of Jambudvipa' (ibid. p. 363, f. n.-3).

briefly. Manimekalai is finally exhorted to dispel her mental darkness by giving up *Kamam, krodham* and *moham*. On hearing him, she becomes an ascetic and does penance.

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TAMIL GLOSSARY

TAMIL GLOSSARY

Āchārakkōvai - ஆசாரக் கோவை

Adigamān - Nedumān Anji - அதிகமான் நெடுமானஞ்சி.

Aḍiyārkunallār - அடியார்க்கு நல்லார்.

Agastya - அகஸ்தியர்.

Agattiyam - அகத்தியம்.

Ahanānūṟu - அகநானூறு.

Aḥaval - அகவல்.

Aindram - ஐந்திரம்.

Aingurunūṟu - ஐங்குறுநூறு.

Alẏārs - ஆழ்வார்கள்.

Ammūvanār - அம்மூவனார்.

Andal - ஆண்டாள்.

Anjanakesi - அஞ்சனகேசி.

Appar - அப்பர்.

Arisil kiḻār - அரிசில் கிழார்.

Arasu-Katilil-tunjiya Neduñ-jeḻiyan - அரசு கட்டிலில் துஞ்சிய நெடுஞ்செழியன்.

Aṟpudat-tiruvantādi - அற்புதத் திருவந்தாதி.

Asiriyar Nallanduvanār - ஆசிரியர் நல்லந்துவனார்.

Bhārata Venba - பாரத வெண்பா.

Chēramān Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṟai - சேரமான் கணைக் காலிரும்பொறை.

Chūḷamaṇi - சூளாமணி.

Dignāga - திங்நாக.

Divākaram - திவாகரம்.

Divyasūri charitam - திவ்யசூரி சரிதம்.

Dramila Sangha - திரமிள சங்கம்.

Elādi - ஏலாதி.

Elēlasinga - ஏலேல சிங்கன்.

Eṭṭutogai - எட்டுத் தொகை.

Iḷamperuvaḻudi - இளம்பெரு வழுதி.

Iḷampūranar - இளம்பூரணர்.

Ilangō - இளங்கோ.

Ilakkana viḷakkam - இலக்கண விளக்கம்.

Iniyavai naṟpadu - இனியவை நாற்பது.

Innā ṇaṟpadu - இன்னா நாற் பது.

Iṟaiyanār Ahapporuḷ - இறையனார் அகப்பொருள்.

Iraṭṭai maṇimālai - இரட்டை மணி மாலை.

Jivaka chintāmaṇi - ஜீவக சிந்தாமணி.

Kaḍaluḷ māynda Iḷamperu vaḻudi - கடலுள் மாய்ந்த இளம்பெருவழுதி.

Kaḍiyalur uruthiran gaṇṇanār - கடியலூர் உருத்திரங் கண்ணனார்.

Kainnilai - கைந்நிலை.

Kakkai Pāḍiniyār - காக்கை பாடினியார்.

Kāḷan - காளன்.

Kaḷaviyaṟ Kārigai - களவியற் காரிகை.

Kalittogai - கலித்தொகை.

Kalyāṇa kathai - கலியாண கதை.

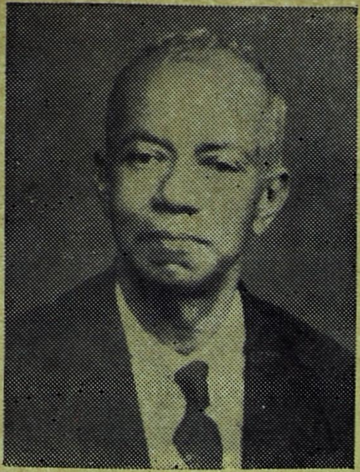
Kāvaṟpendu - காவற்பெண்டு.

Kāvirippūm Paṭṭinam - காவிரிப்பூம் பட்டினம்.

Kiḻ-k-Kaṇakku - கீழ்க்கணக்கு

Peria-Tiruvantādi - பெரிய திருவந்தாதி.
Peria vāchān Pillai - பெரிய வாச்சான் பிள்ளை.
Perumbān ārruppadai பெரும்பாணாற்றுப்படை.
Perundēvanār - பெருந்தேவ னார்.
Perungadai - பெருங்கதை.
Perungausikanār - பெருங் கௌசிகனார்.
Pēy (Alvār) - பேயாழ்வார்.
Pingalakēsi - பிங்கலகேசி.
Poigai Alvār - பொய்கை யாழ்வார்.
Porunar-ārrupadai- பொரு நராற்றுப்படை.
Pulaturai-murriya Kūdalur kilār - புலத்துறை முற்றிய கூடலூர் கிழார்.
Puranānūru - புறநானூறு.
Purapporul venbā mālai புறப்பொருள் வெண்பா மாலை.
Purattirattu - புறத்திரட்டு.
Pūrikkō - பூரிக்கோ.
Rāja-rajan ulā - இராஜ ராஜன் உலா.
Ramānuja - nūrrandadi ராமானுஜ நூற்றந்தாதி.
Sambandar - சம்பந்தர்.
Senguttuvan - செங்குட்டு வன்.
Seyirriyam - செயிற்றியம்.
Seyyuliyal - செய்யுளியல்.
Silappadikāram - சிலப்பதி காரம்.
Sinnamanūr Plates - சின்ன மனூர் சிலாசாசனம்.
Sirukākkai Pādiniyam - சிறு காக்கை பாடினியம்.
Sirupañcha Mūlam - சிறு பஞ்ச மூலம்.
Sirupānārrupadai - சிறு பாணாற்றுப் படை.
Tagadūr - தகடூர்.
Takkayāgapparani - தக்கை யாகப் பரணி.
Tinaimālai nūrraimbadu - திணைமாலை நூற்றைம்பது.
Tinaimoliy-aimbadu - திணை மொழி ஐம்பது.
Tirikadugam - திரிகடுகம்.
Tirugnana Sambandar - திரு ஞான சம்பந்தர்.
Tirukkaiyilāya gnana ulā - திருக்கயிலாய ஞான உலா.
Tirukkōvaiyār - திருக் கோவையார்.
Tirukkural - திருக்குறள்.
Tirumalisai Ālvār - திரு மழிசை ஆழ்வார்.
Tirumandiram - திருமந்திரம்.
Tirumangai Ālvār - திரு மங்கை ஆழ்வார்.
Tirumūlar - திருமூலர்.
Tirumurai - திருமுறை.
Tirumurugārruppadai - திரு முருகாற்றுப்படை.
Tirunāvukkarasu - திரு நாவுக்கரசு.
Tiruppāvai - திருப்பாவை.
Tirut-tondattogai - திருத் தொண்டத்தொகை.
Tiruttakka Devar - திருத் தக்க தேவர்.
Tiruvārūr Mummānik - kōvai - திருவாரூர் மும்மணிக் கோவை.
Tiruvāimoli-திருவாய்மொழி.
Tiruvalluva Mālai - திரு வள்ளுவ மாலை.

Professor S. Vaiyapuripillai



Professor S. Vaiyapuripillai needs no introduction to students of Tamil literature. His was a life dedicated to studies and research in Tamil literature. All alone he struggled through the mazes and helped to establish the chronology of Tamil literature. The glorious literature of the period covered in this book is a sure guide to gain an insight into the aims and aspirations, thoughts and feelings, actions and achievements of the ancient Tamil people. But, chronological difficulties which confronted the students of ancient Tamil literature were sought to be solved by our learned professor whose signal service was to establish a time sequence for our ancient literature.

Professor Vaiyapuripillai was an eruditescholar. He brought to bear on his studies, an unusually keen intellect and analytical mind. He presented his views in an unambiguous manner. He always strove for truth. His patience, devotion and hard work have been crowned with success. The monumental "Tamil Lexicon" edited by him in the shortest possible time is a veritable treasure house of Tamil language. Having gained experience as the Editor of Tamil Lexicon, he devoted his time and energy to examine and scrutinise, compare, study and evaluate a number of available manuscripts of Tamil classics and published, with critical introductions, authoritative editions which are today acclaimed as authentic by the Tamil scholastic world. His numerous studies in Tamil literature, help not only to throw light on the dark corridors of history but also to assess properly our heritage. Further, they outline path of future progress of Tamil literature.

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